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MONOGRAPHS

GARRICK, MACREADY, RACHEL, AND BARON STOCKMAR

BY SIR THEODORE MARTIN

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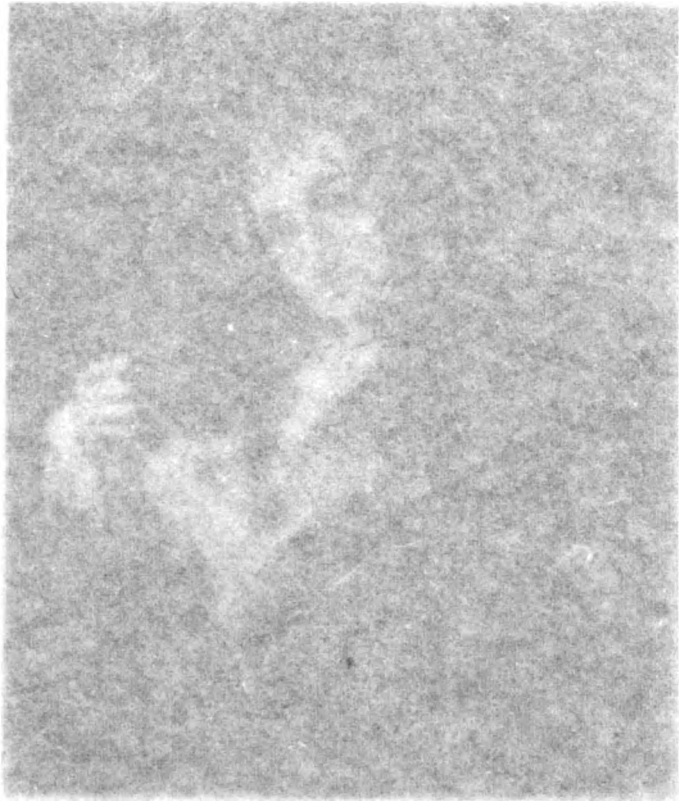

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MONOGRAPHS

GARRICK, MACREADY, RACHEL, AND BARON STOCKMAR

BY SIR THEODORE MARTIN, K.C.B., K.C.V.O.

AUTHOR OF 'THE LIFE OF THE PRINCE CONSORT,' ETC.

NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON AND COMPANY
1906

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[THESE monographs are in substance reprints of articles published some years ago: three of them in the *Quarterly Review* — 'David Garrick' in June, 1868, 'Baron Stockmar' in November, 1872, 'Macready' in June, 1875—and 'Rachel' in *Blackwood's Magazine* for September, 1882. The studies were carefully made, and the only alteration in them is the addition of certain details, with a view to giving more completeness to the original sketches.]

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DAVID GARRICK

In the familiar group of statesmen, wits, authors, and artists, who represent the intellectual activity and best society of England between 1740 and 1780, there is no more prominent or interesting figure than that of David Garrick. It is continually brought before us in the correspondence of Walpole and Gray; in the memoirs of Cumberland, Madame d'Arblay, and Hannah More; and it is his name and doings which lend the chief interest to the biographies of Macklin, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Bellamy, Tate Wilkinson, Charles Dibdin, and others of his stage contemporaries.

In Boswell's 'Life of Johnson' he is a conspicuous figure. Boswell in his very first interview with his hero, being then ignorant of Johnson's strangely inverted love for the great actor, which was constantly venting itself in splenetic sallies against Garrick, but would never listen with patience to a word said in disparagement of him by anybody else, drew down upon himself one of those surly rebuffs of which he was afterwards to have so many. 'What do you think of Garrick?'

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said Johnson to Tom Davies, actor and bookseller, and the future biographer of Garrick, in whose shop the meeting took place. 'He has refused me an order to the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings.' Garrick had given the lady a free benefit at his theatre a few years before, by which she had realized £200. 'Oh, sir,' broke in the fussy Scotsman, not dreaming how little Johnson meant by this sally, 'I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to *you*.' 'Sir,' said Johnson, turning to him with a stern look, 'I have known David Garrick longer than you have done, and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject.'

The incident was typical. All through Boswell's book Garrick's name provokes Johnson's sarcasm, if other people praise; or stimulates his praise, if other people censure. But in which of the two moods he was the more sincere we soon discover. Johnson, it is true, never quite forgave his old pupil and friend for a success so much more rapid, and, in a worldly sense, so much more brilliant, than his own. Garrick, on the other hand, understood and made liberal allowance for the feeling, stung although he often was, when the latent grudge found vent in such phrases as 'What! respect a player!' 'Feelings! Pooh! Punch has no feelings.' But in a life of very diversified experience of what men are, Garrick had learned to

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think more of a friend's virtues than of his failings. He knew how much Johnson had had to bear, both from the world and within himself. It was not difficult for his sympathetic nature to comprehend, that Johnson would have been more than human, had he felt no soreness when he contrasted his own social position and unattractive person and manners with those of the handsome and vivacious actor, to whom not England only, but Europe also, was continually offering up incense; whose society was courted by the ablest and best men and most gifted and beautiful women of his time; who had achieved wealth honourably, and graced it by the refinement of his tastes, and by the charm and bounteousness of his hospitality. And, then, he could not but be conscious that Johnson loved him at heart, and in his better moods did him full justice in such phrases as—'Garrick has written more good prologues than Dryden,' 'He is the first man in the world for sprightly conversation.' Echoes of such sentences as these were certain to reach Garrick's ears, and we may be very sure, that in one way or another he had many proofs of sincere esteem and respect from a man, who spoke from the warmth of conviction when he said, 'Garrick has made a player a higher character,' and all his successes, public and social, 'supported by great wealth of his own acquisition. If all this had happened to me, I should have had a couple of fellows with long poles walking before me to knock

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down everybody that stood in the way. Consider: if this had happened to Cibber or Quin, they'd have jumped over the moon. Yet Garrick speaks to us!'

Garrick has not been fortunate in his biographers. He has had several, Murphy, Davies, and Boaden being the most important. The two first wrote lives of him, which have gone through several editions; the last wrote a memoir, prefixed to two bulky quartos of Garrick's correspondence, which were published in 1831. Murphy and Davies knew the great actor. They were members of his company at Drury Lane—Murphy during a period which, though brief, was long enough to satisfy even his vanity that the stage was not the true sphere for his versatile and ambitious genius, and also to secure him an unenviable niche in Churchill's 'Rosciad'; and Davies from 1752 to 1762, when he quitted the boards, partly through dread of Churchill's sarcastic pen, partly because he found he could not attend both to his shop and to the business of the stage. 'Nobody,' said Johnson, 'can write the life of a man but those who have ate and drank and lived in social intercourse with him.' But a man may have done all these things, and yet write a life very badly. So it was with both Murphy and Davies, for there was bitterness in their hearts of an old standing. Murphy as a dramatic author, and Davies as an actor, had fancied wrongs to avenge,

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and also the humiliation to resent of benefits received and injuries forgiven; and the leaven of their ancient grudges tainted both their works. But Murphy's, besides being venomous, is inaccurate. and, what is more surprising in a man whose dialogue in comedy was terse and sparkling, it is extremely prosy. That of Davies, while much less coloured by prejudice, and upon the whole sensibly and agreeably written, is often incorrect in its details, and far from complete in its treatment of the subject. It was written at Johnson's instigation, but it gave great offence to Mrs. Garrick, who was not likely to forget that her husband had good cause to cut off the biographer from his acquaintanceship. We should have had very different books from both Murphy and Davies could they have dreamed that their own letters to Garrick, with the drafts of his replies, had been preserved, and were one day to rise up in judgment against their ingratitude and injustice to one who had shown them signal forbearance and loaded them with repeated favours.

These letters, with the rest of Garrick's most voluminous correspondence, which he had carefully preserved and docketed, probably with a view to an autobiography at some future date, were placed in Boaden's hands to edit and preface with a memoir. He had not known Garrick either on the stage or in private. But these documents, with such information as he might have obtained from

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Mrs. Garrick, whom he did know, were enough to enable him to produce a satisfactory life. Boaden, however, was not the man for the work. He had neither the sympathetic imagination, the discriminating judgment, nor the vivacity of style, which it demanded; and his memoir is meagre in details, and most colourless and jejune in treatment.

That he did not even make a judicious selection of the correspondence which he edited is now certain. Most valuable much of it is, but not a little could well have been spared to make room for what he omitted. The whole correspondence having very fortunately come many years afterwards into the hands of the late Mr. John Forster, was turned to excellent account in his elaborate essays on Churchill and Foote, and also in his 'Life of Goldsmith,' where he speaks of the letters as forming the most striking and valuable contribution that has yet been made to the great actor's history.

These documents, and many other letters both to and from Garrick which have since come to light, together with the mass of pamphlets, abusive as well as laudatory, of which Garrick, while alive, was the theme, as well as the excellent criticisms on his histrionic powers, both at home and from abroad, furnish the materials for a biography of the great actor and the stage of his time in absolutely embarrassing profusion. But to

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most readers a monograph on a smaller scale will probably be more welcome, if only it shows the man as he was known in his home and to his friends, and also as the public saw him—the great artist who influenced the English stage and the public taste more than any other actor has done, and who by his natural gift of genius, cultivated to its highest point by close observation and constant study of life and character, reached the summit of perfection in what Voltaire calls 'the most difficult of all the arts.'

David Garrick was born at the Angel Inn, Hereford, on February 19, 1716. He was French by descent. His paternal grandfather, David Garric, or Garrique, a French Protestant of good family, had escaped to England after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, reaching London on October 5, 1685. There he was joined in the following December by his wife, who had taken a month to make the passage from Bordeaux in a wretched barque of 14 tons, 'with strong tempests and at great peril of being lost.' Such was the inveteracy of their persecutors that, in effecting their own escape, these poor people had to leave behind them their only child, a boy called Peter, who was out at nurse at Bastide, near Bordeaux.*

* Madame Garric had been compelled openly to abjure her religion, but she lost no time after her arrival in England in making confession and atonement for having done so, as appears from the following entry in the 'Livres des Actes

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It was not till May, 1687, that little Peter was restored to them by his nurse, Mary Mougnier, who came over to London with him. By this time a daughter had been born, and other sons and daughters followed; but of a numerous family three alone survived — Peter, Jane, and David. David settled at Lisbon as a wine merchant, and Peter entered the army in 1706. His regiment was quartered at Lichfield, and some eighteen months after he received his commission he married Arabella, the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Clough, Vicar Choral of the cathedral there. There was no fortune on either side, but much affection. The usual result followed. Ten children were born in rapid succession, of whom seven survived. Of these the third was David, who made his appearance somewhat inopportunely, while his father, then a Lieutenant of Dragoons, was at Hereford on recruiting service.*

Lichfield was the home of the family. There

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du Consistoire' (the governing body of the French Protestant church in St. Martin's Lane): 'D^bre 13, 1685. M^dlle Jeanne Sarrazin femme de M^r David Garric ayant été forcée de signer à Bourdeaux l'abjuration de notre religion, sans être pourtant jamais allée à la Messe, en a témoigné à la Compagnie un sensible deplaisir, et a consenti d'en faire publiquement la recognaissance, ce qu'elle fera Dimanche prochaine.'

* This same city claims the doubtful honour of giving birth, sixty-six years before (February 2, 1650), to another histrionic celebrity—Nell Gwynn. One of her grandsons was a Bishop of Hereford.

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was good blood on both sides of it, and they were admitted into the best society of the place, and held in deserved respect. David was a clever, bright boy, of quick observation, apt at mimicry, and of an engaging temper. Such learning as the grammar-school of the town could give he obtained; and his training here, and at Edial some years afterwards under his townsman Samuel Johnson, produced more of the fruits of a liberal education than commonly results even from schooling of a more elaborate and costly kind. The occasional visits of a strolling troop of players gave the future Roscius his first taste of the fascinations of the drama. To see was to resolve to emulate, and before he was eleven years old he distinguished himself in the part of Sergeant Kite in a performance of Farquhar's 'Recruiting Officer,' organized for the amusement of their friends by his companions and himself.

Meanwhile the cares of a numerous family were growing upon his parents. To meet its expenses, his father exchanged from the Dragoons into a marching regiment, and went upon half-pay. Peter, the eldest boy, had gone into the navy; and upon the invitation of the uncle, whose name he bore, young David, then only eleven, was sent to Lisbon, apparently with the expectation that a provision for life would be made for him in his uncle's business. But either his uncle had no such intention or the boy found the occupation distasteful, for his stay in Portugal did not extend over many

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months. Short as it was, he succeeded in making himself popular there by his vivacity and talents. After dinner he would be set upon the table to recite to the guests passages from the plays they were familiar with at home. A very pleasant inmate he must have been in the house of his well-to-do bachelor uncle. No doubt he was sent home with something handsome in his pocket; and when, a few years afterwards, the uncle came back to England to die, he left his nephew £1,000—twice as much as he gave to any others of the family.

Garrick's father, who had for some years been making an ineffectual struggle to keep his head above water upon his half-pay, found he could do so no longer, and in 1731 he joined his regiment, which had been sent out to garrison Gibraltar, leaving behind him his wife, broken in health, to face single-handed the debts and duns, the worries and anxieties, of a large family. In her son David she found the best support. His heart and head were ever at work to soften her trials, and his gay spirit doubtless brightened with many a smile the sad wistfulness of her anxious face. The fare in her home was meagre, and the dresses of its inmates scanty and well worn; still there were loving hearts in it, which were drawn closer together by their very privations. But the poor lady's heart was away with the father.

'I must tell my dear life and soul,' she writes to him in a letter which reads like a bit of Thackeray

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or Sterne, 'that I am not able to live any longer without him; for I grow very jealous. But in the midst of all this I do not blame my dear. I have very sad dreams for you . . . but I have the pleasure when I am up, to think, were I with you, how tender . . . my dear would be to me; nay, was when I was with you last. O! that I had you in my arms! I would tell my dear life how much I am his.—A. G.'

Her husband had then been only two years gone. Three more weary years were to pass before she was to see him again. This was in 1736, and he returned, shattered in health and spirits, to die within little more than a year. One year more, and she, too, the sad, faithful mother, whose 'dear life' was restored to her arms only to be taken from them by a sterner parting, was herself at rest.

During his father's absence Garrick had not been idle. His busy brain and restless fancy had been laying up stores of observation for future use. He was a general favourite in the Lichfield circle—amusing the old, and heading the sports of the young — winning the hearts of all. Gilbert Walmsley, Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court, a good and wise friend, who had known and loved him from childhood, took him under his special care. On his suggestion, possibly by his help, David and his brother George were sent as pupils to Johnson's academy at Edial, to complete their studies in Latin and French. Garrick and Johnson had been friends before, and there was indeed but

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seven years' difference in their ages. But Johnson even then impressed his pupil with a sense of superiority, which never afterwards left him; while Garrick established an equally lasting hold upon the somewhat capricious heart of his ungainly master. From time to time he was taken by friends to London, where, in the theatres that were to be the scenes of his future triumphs, he had opportunities of studying some of the leading performers, whom he was afterwards to eclipse. Even in these early days the dream of coping with these favourites of the town had taken possession of him. But he kept it to himself, well knowing the shock he would have inflicted on the kind hearts at home had he suggested to them the possibility of such a career for himself.

By the time his father returned from Gibraltar Garrick was nineteen. A profession must be chosen, and the Bar appears to have been thought the fittest for a youth of so much readiness and address, and with an obviously unusual faculty of speech. Some further preliminary studies were, however, indispensable. He could not afford to go to either University, and in this strait his friend Walmsley bethought him of a 'dear old friend' at Rochester, the Rev. Mr. Colson, afterward Lucasian Professor at Cambridge, a man of eminence in science, as a person most likely to give young Garrick the instruction in 'mathematics, philosophy, and humane learning' which was deemed requisite to

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complete his education. To him, therefore, a letter was despatched, asking him to undertake the charge, from which we get an authentic and agreeable picture of the young fellow's character:

'He is a very sensible fellow, and a good scholar, nineteen, of sober and good dispositions, and is as ingenious and promising a young man as ever I knew in my life. Few instructions on your side will do, and in the intervals of study he will be an agreeable companion for you. This young gentleman has been much with me, ever since he was a child, and I have taken much pleasure in instructing him, and have a great affection and esteem for him' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 1).

Mr. Colson accepted the proposal; but, by the time the terms had been arranged, another young native of Lichfield, in whom Walmsley felt no slight interest, had determined to move southward to try his fortunes, and was also to be brought under Mr. Colson's notice. This was Samuel Johnson, whose Edial academy had by this time been starved out, but for whom London, the last hope of ambitious scholars, was still open. He had written his tragedy of 'Irene,' and it had found provincial admirers, Walmsley among the number, who thought a tragedy in verse the open sesame to fame and fortune. For London, therefore, Johnson and Garrick started together—Johnson, as he used afterwards to say, with twopence-halfpenny in his pocket, and Garrick with three halfpence in his, a mocking exaggeration, not very wide, however,

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of the truth. Walmsley announced their departure to Mr. Colson on March 2, 1737, in the often-quoted words:

'He (Garrick) and another neighbour of mine, one Mr. Johnson,* set out this morning for London together; Davy Garrick to be with you early next week; and Mr. Johnson to try his fate with a tragedy, and to see to get himself employed with some translation, either from the Latin or the French. Johnson is a very good scholar and poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy writer' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 2).

For some reason not now known Garrick did not go to Mr. Colson in a week. On reaching town he lost no time in getting himself admitted to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn (March 19, 1737) by payment of the admission fee of £3 3s. 4d., the only act of membership which he appears ever to have performed. He stayed in London with Johnson for some time, and their finances fell so low that they had to borrow £5 on their joint note from one Wilcox, a bookseller and acquaintance of

* In 1769, when Garrick was one of the most notable men in England, the letters of Walmsley to Colson were published by Mrs. Newling, Colson's daughter. She sent the originals at the same time to Garrick's friend Mr. Sharp, to be forwarded to the great actor. In the very charming letter to Garrick which accompanied them, Mr. Sharp says: 'If I had called, as I sometimes do, on Dr. Johnson, and showed him one of them where he is mentioned as *one* Johnson, I should have risked, perhaps, the sneer of one of his ghastly smiles' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 334).

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Garrick's, who afterwards proved one of Johnson's best friends. Most probably Garrick's plans of study under Mr. Colson were disconcerted by the illness of his father, who died within a month after Garrick had started from Lichfield. Nor was it until the death soon afterwards of the Lisbon uncle, and the opening to Garrick of his £1,000 legacy, that he found himself in a condition to incur that expense.

Late in 1737 he went to Rochester, and remained with Mr. Colson for some months, but with what advantage can be only matter of conjecture. Colson, like the Rev. Josiah Cargill, as described by Meg Dods in Scott's 'St. Ronan's Well,' was 'just dung donnart wi' learning,' a man too much absorbed in abstruse scientific studies to be the fittest of tutors for a youth of the mercurial temperament and social habits of Garrick. But there was so much of honest ambition and natural goodness of disposition in his pupil, that it may safely be assumed he did not fail to profit by the learning of the man, of whose peculiarities he must have been quite aware before he placed himself under his charge. Whatever his progress in the *literæ humaniores*, Rochester was as good a field as any for such a student of character and manners. He certainly made himself liked in the family, and Colson's daughter, Mrs. Newling, recalling herself to Garrick's notice twenty years afterwards, speaks of the great pleasure with which she reflects 'upon

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the happy minutes his vivacity caused' during his stay with them.

Early in 1738 Garrick returned to Lichfield. By this time his brother Peter had left the navy and returned home. There were five brothers and sisters to be provided for, so Peter and he clubbed their little fortunes, and set up in business as wine merchants in Lichfield and London. David, by this time tolerably familiar with the ways of town, and not unknown at the coffee-houses where his wines might be in demand, took charge of the London business. Vaults were taken in Durham Yard, between the Strand and the river, where the Adelphi Terrace now stands, and here Foote, in his usual vein of grotesque exaggeration, used to say he had known the great actor 'with three quarts of vinegar in the cellar calling himself a wine merchant.'

Of Garrick at this period we get a vivid glimpse from Macklin, an established actor, who was then Garrick's inseparable friend, but was afterwards to prove a constant thorn in his side through life, and his most malignant detractor after death. Garrick 'was then,' as Macklin told his own biographer Cooke, 'a very sprightly young man, neatly made, of an expressive countenance, and most agreeable manners.' Mr. Cooke adds, upon the same authority:

'The stage possessed him wholly; he could talk or think of nothing but the theatre; and as they

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often dined together in select parties, Garrick rendered himself the idol of the meeting by his mimicry, anecdotes, etc. With other funds of information, he possessed a number of good travelling stories' (with which his youthful voyage to Lisbon had apparently supplied him), 'which he narrated, sir' (added the veteran), 'in such a vein of pleasantry and rich humour as I have seldom seen equalled' (Cooke's 'Life of Macklin,' p. 96).

There could be only one conclusion to such a state of things. The wine business languished. That it was not wholly ruined, and Garrick with it, shows that with all his love of society he was able to exercise great prudence and self-restraint. 'Though on pleasure bent, he had a frugal mind.' Early habits of self-denial, and the thought of the young brothers and sisters at Lichfield, were enough to check everything like extravagance, though they could not control the passion which was hourly feeding itself upon the study of plays and intercourse with players, and bearing him onwards to the inevitable goal. Their society, and that of the wits and critics about town, were the natural element for talents such as his. He could even then turn an epigram or copy of verses, for which his friend Johnson would secure a place in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Paragraphs of dramatic criticism frequently exercised his pen. He had a farce, 'Lethe,' accepted at Drury Lane, and another, 'The Lying Valet,' ready for the stage. Actors and managers were among his intimates.

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He had the *entrée* behind the scenes at the two great houses, Drury Lane and Covent Garden, and his histrionic powers were so well recognised that one evening in 1740, when Yates was too ill to go on as harlequin at the little theatre in Goodman's Fields, Garrick was allowed to take his place for the early scenes, and got through them so well that the substitution was not surmised by the audience.

Nor had his been a mere lounger's delight in the pleasures of the theatre. The axiom, that the stage is nought which does not 'hold the mirror up to Nature,' had taken deep hold upon his mind; but from the actual stage he found that Nature, especially in the poetical drama, had all but vanished, and in its place had come a purely conventional and monotonous style of declamation, with a stereotyped system of action no less formal and unreal. There was a noble opening for anyone who should have the courage and the gifts to return to Nature and to Truth, and Garrick felt that it was 'in him' to effect the desired revolution. That the public were prepared to welcome a reform had been demonstrated by the success, in February, 1741, of his friend Macklin at Drury Lane, in the part of Shylock, which the public had up to that time been accustomed to see treated on the stage as a comic part.* Pushing aside Lord

* 'I cannot but think the character was tragically designed,' is the hesitating suggestion of a Shakespearian

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Lansdowne's 'Jew of Venice,' which had long supplanted the original play, and reading Shakespeare's play by the light of his vigorous intellect, Macklin saw the immense scope the character afforded for the display of varied passion and emotion. Nature had given him the Shylock look, and in his heart he had 'the irrevocable hate and study of revenge,' of which the character is so grand an expression. In the early scenes he riveted the audience by the hard, cutting force of his manner and utterance. The third act came, and here he says:

'I knew I should have the pull and reserved myself accordingly. At this period I threw out all my fire, and, as the contrasted passions of joy for the merchant's losses and grief for the elopement of Jessica open a fine field for an actor's powers, I had the good fortune to please beyond my warmest expectations. The whole house was in an uproar of applause, and I was obliged to pause between the speeches to give it vent, so as to be heard.'

'No money, no title,' added the veteran, as he

editor—Rowe, himself a poet. The playbill of Macklin's first night's appearance in the part records that Mrs. Clive was Portia, and Mrs. Pritchard, Nerissa. Strange that an actress whose strength lay in low comedy should on this occasion, and for years afterwards, have done her best, as she did, to bring down the great lady of Belmont from the high level on which Shakespeare placed her to that of a vulgar flirt, who sought, among other horrors, to catch the applause of the 'groundlings' by burlesquing in the Trial scene the manners of a flippant barrister.

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recited his triumph, 'could purchase what I felt. And let no man tell me after this, what fame will not inspire a man to do, and how far the attainment of it will not remunerate his greatest labours. By God, sir, though I was not worth £50 in the world at this time, yet, let me tell you, I was Charles the Great for that night' (Cooke's 'Life of Macklin,' p. 93).

Macklin's powers were of an exceptional kind. He wanted variety and flexibility, and those graces of person and manner which are indispensable to a great actor. His success was, therefore, only momentary, and it was left to his young friend and companion to complete the reform of which his own treatment of Shylock was the first indication.

Nor was that reform far distant. The very next summer was to decide Garrick's career. His broodings were now to take actual shape. But before hazarding an appearance in London he wisely resolved to test his powers in the country, and with this view he went down to Ipswich with the company of Giffard, the manager of the Goodman's Fields Theatre, and made his appearance under the name of Lyddal as Aboan in Southern's tragedy of 'Oroonoko.'* This he followed up by several other characters, both tragic and comic, none of them of first importance, but sufficient

* On July 21, 1741, he played at the same theatre Captain Duretête in 'The Inconstant,' and Caius on the 28th.

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to give him ease on the stage, and at the same time enable him to ascertain wherein his strength lay. His success was unquestionable, and decided him on appealing to a London audience.

The quality in which Garrick then and throughout his career surpassed all his contemporaries was the power of kindling with the exigencies of the scene. He lost himself in his part. It spoke through him, and the greater the play of emotion and passion which it demanded, the more diversified the expression and action for which it gave scope, the more brilliantly did his genius assert itself. His face answered to his feelings, and its workings gave warning of his words before he uttered them; his voice, melodious and full of tone, though far from strong, had the penetrating quality hard to define, but which is never wanting either in the great orator or the great actor; and his figure, light, graceful, and well balanced, though under the average size, was equal to every demand which his impulsive nature made upon it. We can see all this in the portraits of him even at this early period. Only in those of a later date do we get some idea of the commanding power of his eyes, which not only held his audience like a spell, but controlled, with a power almost beyond endurance, his fellow-performers in the scene. But from the first the power must have been there. He had noted well all that was good in the professors of the art he was destined to revolutionize, and he

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had learned, as men of ability do learn, even from their very defects, in what direction true excellence was to be sought for. Long afterwards he used to say that his own chief successes in 'Richard III.' were due to what he had learned through watching Ryan, a very indifferent actor, in the same part. Richard was the character he chose for his first London trial, a choice made with a wise estimate of his own powers, for the display of which it was eminently fitted. At this time the part was in the possession of Quin, whose 'manner of heaving up his words and laboured action,' as described by Davies, were the best of foils to the fiery energy and subtle varieties of expression with which Garrick was soon to make the public familiar. He appeared, by the usual venial fiction on similar occasions, as a 'gentleman who never appeared on any stage.' The theatre, a very small one (see Appendix, p. 93), was far from full; still, the audience was numerous enough to make the actor feel his triumph, and to spread the report of it widely. They were taken by surprise at first by a style at once so new and so consonant to Nature.

'To the just modulation of the words,' says Davies, 'and concurring expression of the features, from the genuine workings of Nature, they had been strangers, at least for some time. But, after Mr. Garrick had gone through a variety of scenes, in which he gave evident proofs of consummate art and perfect knowledge of character, their doubts were turned into surprise and astonish-

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ment, from which they relieved themselves in loud and reiterated applause' ('Life of Garrick,' vol. i., p. 45).

Macklin, of course, was there, and often spoke of the pleasure that night's performance gave him.

'It was amazing how, without any example, but, on the contrary, with great prejudices against him, he could throw such spirit and novelty into the part as to convince every impartial person, on the very first impression, that he was right. In short, sir, he at once decided the public taste; and though the players formed a cabal against him, with Quin at their head, it was a puff to thunder. The east and west end of the town made head against them, and the little fellow in this and about half a dozen other characters secured his own immortality' (Cooke's 'Life of Macklin,' p. 99).

The *Daily Post* announced his reception next day in terms which, however little they would be worthy of belief in any journal of the present day, at that time were enough to arrest attention, as 'the most extraordinary and great that was ever known on such an occasion' as a first appearance. Another critic, in the *Champion*, who obviously was equal to his work, a phenomenon at no time common in newspaper critics of the stage, called attention to his nice proportions, his clear and penetrating voice, sweet and harmonious, without monotony, drawling, or affectation; 'neither whining, bellowing, or grumbling'—tragedians of those days must have been marvellously like our

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own—'but perfectly easy in its transitions, natural in its cadence, and beautiful in its elocution.'

'He is not less happy in his mien and gait, in which he is neither strutting nor mincing, neither stiff nor slouching. When three or four are on the stage with him *he is attentive to whatever is spoke*, and never drops his character when he has finished his speech by either looking contemptuously on an inferior performer, unnecessary spitting, or suffering his eyes to wander through the whole circle of spectators. His action is never superfluous, awkward, or too frequently repeated, but graceful, decent, and becoming.'

This is invaluable, both as showing what Garrick was and what the actors of that time—in this also, unhappily, too like the actors of our own—were not. He listened as well as he spoke. What passed on the stage was to him as real as if it were a scene in actual life. He was, in fact, 'terribly in earnest.' He did not play with his work. He had transported himself into the ideal Richard, and his strong conception spoke in every flash of his eyes, every change of his features, every motion of his body. It is characteristic of the fervour with which he threw himself into the part, that before the fourth act was over he had all but run out of voice, and was indebted to the seasonable relief of a Seville orange from a chance loiterer behind the scenes for getting articulately to the end of the play. This failure of the voice often happened to him afterwards, and from the same cause. It is

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one of the characteristics of a sensitive organization, and did not arise in him from any undue vehemence, but evidently from the intensity which he threw into his delivery.

A power like this was sure of rapid recognition in those days, when theatres formed a sort of fourth estate. Garrick's first appearance was on October 19, 1741. He repeated the character the seven following nights, then changed it for Aboan, his first part of the Ipswich series. The audiences were still moderate, and his salary—a guinea a night—moderate in proportion. But fame had carried the report of the new wonder from the obscure corner of the city, near the Minories, in which his friend Giffard's theatre was situated, to the wits and fashionable people in the West End. 'Richard' was restored to the bills. 'Goodman's Fields,' says Davies, 'was full of the splendours of St. James's and Grosvenor Squares; the coaches of the nobility filled up the space from Temple Bar to Whitechapel.' What Garrick valued more than all this concourse of fashionables, men of high character and undoubted taste flocked to hear him; and on November 2, Pope, ill and failing, who had come out early in the year to see Macklin's Shylock, and had recognised its excellence, was again tempted from his easy-chair at Twickenham by the rumour of a worthy successor having arisen to the Betterton and Booth of his early admiration.

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'I saw,' said Garrick, describing the event long afterwards to the somewhat magniloquent Percival Stockdale, 'our little poetical hero, dressed in black, seated in a side-box near the stage, and viewing me with a serious and earnest attention. His look shot and thrilled like lightning through my frame, and I had some hesitation in proceeding from anxiety and from joy. As Richard gradually blazed forth, the house was in a roar of applause, and the conspiring hand of Pope showered me with laurels' ('Stockdale's Memoirs,' vol. ii., p. 152).

Pope returned to see him twice, and his verdict, which reached Garrick through Lord Orrery, shows how deeply he was impressed by Garrick's fresh and forcible style, and by the genuine inspiration which animated his performance. 'That young man never had his equal as an actor, and he will never have a rival.' Pope dreaded that success would spoil him; but Garrick's genius was not of the ungenuine kind which is spoiled by success. He knew only too well how far his best achievements fell short of what his imagination conceived. Others might think his delineations could not be improved. Not so he; for act as long as he might, there was no great part, in Shakespeare especially, which would not constantly present new details to elaborate, or suggest shades of significance or contrast which had previously escaped him. The praise of old Mrs. Porter, herself the greatest tragedian of her time, who had come up to town to see him from her retirement in the country,

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must have spoken more eloquently to him than even Pope's broad eulogium, and in it, too, there was the prophecy of the 'All hail, hereafter.' 'He is born an actor, and does more at his first appearance than ever anybody did with twenty years' practice; and, good God! what will he be in time?'* The Duke of Argyle (the MacCallum More whom Scott has immortalized in 'The Heart of Midlothian') and Lord Cobham, great authorities in stage matters, pronounced him superior to Betterton. The very conflicts of opinion to which such high commendations gave rise were the best of fame for the young artist. They drew crowds to the theatre, and even before the end of 1741 it was often far too small to accommodate the numbers that flocked for admittance. The humble salary of a guinea a night was clearly no adequate return for such merits. Giffard offered him a share in the management upon equal terms, and within the next few months the foundation of the actor's ultimate great fortune was laid.

Such success could not fail to provoke the jealousy of those performers who had hitherto occupied the foremost ranks. It was a virtual condemnation of all they had trained themselves to think true acting. 'If this young fellow is right, then we have all been wrong,' said one, as

* This speech was conveyed to Garrick in a letter, dated April 26, 1742, from his friend the Rev. T. Newton ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 8).

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if in that statement were included a final verdict against him. 'This,' remarked the sententious Quin, 'is the wonder of a day; Garrick is a new religion; the people follow him as another Whitefield; but they will soon return to church again.'* Return, however, they did not. A new era had begun, and Garrick, whose ready pen did not always do him such good service, was able to retort the sarcasm in a smart epigram, of which these two lines have kept their place in literature:

> 'When doctrines meet with general approbation,
> It is not heresy, but reformation.'

When Dukes by the dozen, great Parliament men, Mr. Pitt and others, and even Cabinet Ministers, were to be seen in the front boxes applauding, and were known to court the young actor's acquaintance, the adverse whispers of the few, who are always too wise to believe in what all the rest of mankind believe in, were of small account. The poet Gray might pooh-pooh the new genius—

* Quin and Garrick became excellent friends. Leaving a coffee-house one night together, only one sedan-chair was to be had. 'Put Davie in the lantern,' said Quin, stepping into it. 'Happy to give Mr. Quin light in anything,' was Garrick's rejoinder. After Quin left the stage, he often came up from Bath to visit Mr. and Mrs. Garrick at their country house at Hampton. Garrick wrote the lines for Quin's monument in Bath Cathedral, but they are not in his best vein. They smack of the depressing influence of a bad attack of gout under which he was suffering when they were written.

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its freshness and fire probably jarred his finely-strung nerves—and Horace Walpole insinuate that he 'saw nothing wonderful in him.' When did he ever recognise anything truly great? But they felt themselves to be the heretics, and powerless against the overwhelming tide of popularity which had set in. Even Colley Cibber, whose adaptation of 'Richard III.' was Garrick's assay piece, and whose preconceived notions of the character must have received a rude shock from the new soul put into it by the young actor, was reluctantly driven to admit to Mrs. Bracegirdle, 'Gadso, Bracey, the little fellow is clever.' The praise of so good a critic and so experienced an actor was indeed valuable, and in recounting his successes to his brother Peter, Garrick writes with obvious pride (December 22, 1741), 'Old Cibber has spoken with the greatest commendation of my acting.'

While people were still in admiration at the tragic force of his Richard, he surprised them by the display of comic powers, scarcely less remarkable, in Clodio in the 'Fop's Fortune,' Fondlewife in Congreve's 'Old Bachelor,' and other characters, thus early demonstrating his own doctrine that 'there must be comedy in the perfect actor of tragedy,' of which he was afterwards to furnish so brilliant an example. His lively farce of 'The Lying Valet' (produced in December, 1741) established his reputation as a writer, at the same time that it gave him in the part of Sharp a field for the

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airy vivacity, the ever-bubbling gaiety of tone, the talent of making witty things doubly witty by the way of saying them, for which he was afterwards so famous. Some of his friends (his townsman Newton, the future Bishop, then tutor to Lord Carpenter's son, among the number) thought his appearance in such parts a mistake.

'You, who are equal to the greatest parts, strangely demean yourself in acting anything that is low or little,' he wrote, January 18, 1742. 'There are abundance of people who hit off low humour and succeed in the coxcomb and the buffoon very well; but there is scarce one in an age who is capable of acting the hero in tragedy and the fine gentleman in comedy. Though you perform these parts never so well, yet there is not half the merit in excelling in them as in the others.'

Sound enough advice in the main and to actors of limited scope, and most politic as a warning, by which Garrick profited, not to let himself down by playing merely farce parts. But there is no good reason why an actor of the requisite genius should not play Touchstone as well as Othello, Sir Toby Belch as well as Coriolanus, with no more loss of caste than Shakespeare for having written them. But then there must be the requisite genius to justify the attempt. This Garrick had, as was soon afterwards proved, when he passed from King Lear to Abel Drugger in Ben Jonson's 'Alchemist,' from Hamlet to Bayes in 'The Rehearsal,' and left his severest critics in doubt

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in which he was most to be admired. 'Future times,' Wilks writes, 'will scarcely credit the amazing contrast between his Lear and Schoolboy, or his Richard and his Fribble. He gives us not resemblances, but realities.'

Indeed, it was just this wide range of power, this Shakespearian multiformity of conception, which was the secret of Garrick's greatness, and, *after his death*, made even the cynical Walpole confess that he was 'the greatest actor that ever lived, both in comedy and tragedy.' Newton himself was struck by this a few months later. He had just seen Garrick's Lear, and after giving him the opinion of certain friends that he far exceeded Booth in that character, and even equalled Betterton, he goes on to say:

'The thing that strikes me above all others is that variety in your acting, and your being so totally a different man in Lear from what you are in Richard. There is a sameness in every other actor. Cibber is something of a coxcomb in everything; and Wolsey, Syphax, and Iago, all smell strong of the essence of Lord Foppington. Booth was a philosopher in Cato, and was a philosopher in everything else! His passion in Hotspur, I hear, was much of the same nature, whereas yours was an old man's passion, and an old man's voice and action; and, in the four parts wherein I have seen you, Richard, Chamont, Bayes, and Lear, I never saw four actors more different from one another than you are from yourself' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 7).

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His Lear, like his Richard, seems from the first to have been superb. Cooke, indeed, in his 'Memoir of Macklin,' says the first and second performances of the part disappointed that severe critic. It did not sufficiently indicate the infirmities of the man 'fourscore and upwards'; the curse did not break down, as it should have done, in the impotence of rage; there was a lack of dignity in the prison scene, and so forth. Garrick took notes of Macklin's criticisms on all these points, withdrew the play for six weeks, and restudied the character in the interval. Of the result on his next appearance Macklin always spoke with rapture. The curse in particular exceeded all he could have imagined; it seemed to electrify the audience with horror. The words 'Kill—kill—kill,' echoed all the revenge of a frantic King, 'whilst his pathos on discovering his daughter Cordelia drew tears of commiseration from the whole house. In short, sir, the little dog made it a *chef-d'œuvre*, and a *chef-d'œuvre* it continued to the end of his life.'

While the town was ringing with his triumphs, and his brain was still on fire with the fulfilment of his cherished dreams, Garrick did not forget his sober partner in business nor the other good folks at Lichfield, to whose genteel notions his becoming a stage-player, he knew, would be a terrible shock. The Ipswich performances had escaped their notice; and Brother Peter, when in town soon afterwards, found him out of health and spirits. He was then

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in the miserable interim 'between the acting of a dreadful thing and the first motion' of it. Garrick, though he had quite made up his mind to go on the stage, was afraid to break the news to his family. But he broke it in a letter to his brother and partner* the day after his *début* at Goodman's Fields, while the plaudits of his audience were yet sounding in his ears, deprecating his censure with an unassuming earnestness which speaks volumes for the modesty of the artist, and the simple and loving nature of the man.

'My mind,' he writes, '(as you must know) has been always inclined to the stage, nay, so strongly so, that all my illness and lowness of spirits was owing to my want of resolution to tell you my thoughts when here. Finding at last both my inclination and interest required some new way of life, I have chose the most agreeable to myself, and though I know you will be much displeased at me, yet I hope when you shall find that I may have the genius of an actor, without the vices, you will think the less severely of me, and not be ashamed to own me for a brother. . . . Last night I play'd Richard the Third to the surprise of everybody, and as I shall make very near £300 per annum by it, and as it is really what I doat upon, I am resolved to pursue it.'

The wine business at Durham Yard, he explained, had not prospered—£400 of Garrick's small capital had been lost—and he saw no prospect of retrieving

* The letter is dated October 19, written, no doubt, before he went to bed on the night of his *début*.

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it. He was prepared to make every reasonable arrangement with his brother about their partnership, and in his new career better fortune awaited him, of which his family should share the fruits. But the news spread dismay in the old home at Lichfield; their respectability was compromised by one of their blood becoming 'a harlotry player,' and getting mixed up with the loose morals and shifty ways of the theatrical fraternity.

Before Peter's reply reached him, Garrick must have known that his fame was secure. But the tone of his rejoinder is still modest, though firm. Writing again, on October 27, 1741, he assures his brother that even his friends, 'who were at first surprised at my intent, by seeing me on the stage, are now well convinced it was impossible for me to keep off it.' As to company, 'the best in town' were desirous of his, and he had received more civilities since he came on the stage than he ever did in all his life before. 'Leonidas' Glover has been to see him every night, and goes about saying he had not seen acting for ten years before.

'In short, were I to tell you what they say about me, 'twould be too vain, though I am now writing to a brother. . . . I am sorry my sisters are under such uneasiness, and, as I really love both them and you, will ever make it my study to appear your affectionate brother, D. Garrick.'

A less modest or more selfish man would have thrown off with some impatience the weak scruples

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of his family about loss of caste. How could he be doing wrong in following the irresistible bent of a genius for what he knew to be one of the most difficult as well as noblest of the arts, however much it might have been discredited by the folly or the vice of some of its followers, or disparaged as an 'idle trade' in the opinion of the unreflecting? But Garrick's kindly heart and no less excellent temper determined him to pursue a conciliatory course. He reminded his brother, therefore, 'how handsomely and how reputably some have lived, as Booth, Mills, Wilks, Cibber, etc., admitted into and admired by the best companies.' In a future letter (November 10, 1741) he told him that

'Mr. Pitt, who is reckoned the greatest orator in the House of Commons, said I was the best actor the English stage had produced, and he sent a gentleman to let me know he and the other gentleman would be glad to see me. The Prince has heard so great a character of me, that we are in daily expectation of his coming to see me.'

This sort of thing was calculated to impress the rather dull brain of Peter and the timid souls of the sisters, which would have been impervious to any appeal on the score of the intrinsic nobility of the actor's art. Garrick could feel within himself, and might have told them, that he had his vocation as clearly as ever poet or painter had his, and that it no more rested with himself what 'he should do or what refuse' than with a Milton to write, or a

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Raphael to design. But to have written to the good people at Lichfield of these things would have been to talk to stone walls. He therefore keeps steadily before their eyes the numbers of great folks who are pressing for his acquaintance—'the great Mr. Murray, counsellor' (afterwards Lord Mansfield), Pope, Mr. Littleton, the Prince's favourite, with all of whom he has supped, and who have all treated him 'with the highest civility and complaisance.' 'Mr. Littleton,' he writes to his brother Peter (April 19, 1741), 'told me he never knew what acting was till I appeared, and said I was born to act what Shakespeare wrote.' He has dined with Lords Halifax, Sandwich, and Chesterfield. 'In short, I believe nobody (as an actor) was ever more caressed, and my character as a private man makes 'em more desirous of my company.'* When they found their brother making his way in the highest quarters, and becoming well to do at the same time, the views of his family underwent a change. It was not, however, till December 2, 1741, that Garrick threw off the mask, and performed under his own name. By this time even they must have begun to doubt, whether honour was not more likely to accrue to them than discredit from the step which he had taken. But it must have been no small pain to him to have the vulgar estimate

* The details of this part of Garrick's correspondence are fully given in Book III., cap. ii., of Goldsmith's Life, by Mr. Forster.

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of his profession thrown so remorselessly in his teeth by his own kindred; and that even in the first excitement of his success he had misgivings as to what would be his social position, and had expressed them to his clerical friend Newton,* may be inferred from a letter of that wise and liberally-minded man.

'You need make no apology,' he writes to Garrick, December 7, 1741, 'for your profession, at least to me. I always thought that you were born an actor, if ever any man was so; and it will be your own indiscretion (and I hope and believe you will hardly be guilty of such indiscretion) if coming upon the stage hurts your reputation, and does not make your fortune. As great talents are required for acting well, as for almost anything; and an excellent actor, if at the same time he is an honest, worthy man, is a fit companion for anybody. You know Roscius was familiar with Cicero, and the greatest men of his time; and Betterton used frequently to visit Bishops Sprat and Atterbury, and other divines, as well as the best of the nobility and gentry, not as a mimic and buffoon, to make diversion for the company, but as an agreeable friend and companion.'

This was encouragement of a very commonplace kind to a man who respected his art and himself. But still it was encouragement, and encouragement not to be despised. For it was not alone the many-headed vulgar who thought themselves entitled to look with a kind of scorn upon a player, but the

* Afterwards Bishop Newton, the editor of what was at one time the standard edition of the 'Paradise Lost.'

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so-called men of letters, with Johnson at their head, who above all others should have been superior to such prejudice, lost no opportunity of letting Garrick feel that they regarded the actor as of an inferior order to themselves. It was only men of the highest gifts, like Burke, Warburton, Camden, or Reynolds, or of the highest social position, like the Dukes of Devonshire or Portland, or the Spencers, who never wounded his self-respect by airs of superiority or condescension.

Garrick paid the actor's accustomed penalty for success by being overworked. Between his first appearance in October, 1741, and the following May, when the Goodman's Fields Theatre closed, he played no less than 138 times, and for the most part in characters of the greatest weight and importance in both tragedy and comedy. Among the former were Richard, Lear, Pierre; among the latter, Lord Foppington, in Cibber's 'Careless Husband,' Fondlewife, and Bayes. The range of character and passion which these parts covered was immense. To have played them at all, new as he was to the stage, was no common feat of industry, but only genius of the most remarkable kind could have carried him through them, not only without injury, but with positive increase, to the high reputation his first performances had created. In Bayes of 'The Rehearsal' he was nearly as popular as in Richard and Lear; and he made the part subservient to his purpose

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of exposing the false and unnatural style into which actors had fallen, by making Bayes speak his turgid heroics in imitation of some of the leading performers. But when he found how the men whose faults he burlesqued—good, worthy men in their way—were made wretched by seeing themselves and what they did in all seriousness held up to derision, his naturally kind heart and good taste made him drop these imitations. Garrick's true vocation was to teach his brethren a purer style by his own example, not to dishearten them by ridicule. Mimicry, besides, as he well knew, is the lowest form of the actor's art, and no mere mimic can be a great actor, for sincerity, not simulation, is at the root of all greatness on the stage.

The success of Garrick at Goodman's Fields emptied the patent houses at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, and the patentees had recourse to the law to compel Giffard to close his theatre. Garrick was secured for the next season at Drury Lane. But as that house did not open till September, and the people of Dublin were impatient to see him, he started off for that city early in June, and remained there, playing a round of his leading parts, till the middle of August. An epidemic which raged during the greater part of this time, caused by distress among the poor and by the great heat, got the name of the 'Garrick fever.' But the epidemic which he really caused was not among the poor, but

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among the wits and fine ladies of that then fashionable and lively city, who were not likely to be behind his English admirers in enthusiasm. He was berhymed and fêted on all hands, and from them he got the title of Roscius, which to this hour is coupled with his name. During this engagement he added Hamlet to his list of characters. Like his Richard and his Lear, it was treated in a manner quite his own, and, like them, it was from the first a success, but was, of course, much elaborated and modified in future years.

At Drury Lane Garrick found himself associated with his old friend Macklin, who was deputy-manager, and with Peg Woffington, that 'dallying and dangerous beauty,' under whose spell he appears to have fallen as early as 1740. As an actress she was admirable for the life, the nature, and the grace which she threw into all she did, set off by a fine person and a face, which, as her portraits show, though habitually pensive in its expression, was capable of kindling into passion, or beaming with the sudden and fitful lights of feeling and fancy. She had been literally picked out of the streets of Dublin as a child crying 'halfpenny salads,*

* 'I have met with more than one in Dublin who assured me that they remember to have seen lovely Peggy with a little dish on her head, and without shoes to cover her delicate feet, crying through College Green, Dame Street, and other parts of that end of the town, "All this fine spring salad for a halfpenny—all for a halfpenny—all for a halfpenny—here!"' ('Memoirs of Lee Lewis,' vol. ii., p. 16).

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and trained by a rope-dancer, Madame Violante, as one of a Lilliputian company, in which she figured in such parts as Captain Macheath in Gay's 'Beggar's Opera.' Like Rachel and many other celebrated women, she contrived — it is hard to say how — to educate herself, so that she could hold her own in conversation in any society; and such was her natural grace that she excelled in characters like Millamant and Lady Townley, for which the well-bred air of good society was essential. Frank, kindly and impulsive, she had also wit at will to give piquancy to the expressions of a very independent turn of mind. She never scrupled to avow that she preferred the company of men to that of women, who 'talked,' she said, 'of nothing but silks and scandal.' The men returned the compliment by being very fond of her company. 'Forgive her one female error,' says Murphy, 'and it might fairly be said of her that she was adorned with every virtue'—a truly modest plea, when it is considered that Peg was not more chaste, and certainly not less mercenary, than Horace's Barine, to whom, indeed, she was likened in some pointed but very heartless verses by one of her many lovers, Sir C. Hanbury Williams. 'By Jove!' she exclaimed, as she ran into the greenroom one night from the stage, when she had left the house cheering her exit as Sir Harry Wildair, 'they are in such delight, I believe one half of them fancy I am a man.' 'Madam,'

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rejoined Quin, 'the other half, then, has the best reason for knowing to the contrary.'

But when Garrick first fell under her fascination these frailties had not been developed. She was then in the bloom of her beauty—and how charming that was we can see from Hogarth's exquisite portrait (in the Marquis of Lansdowne's collection) —and though suitors of wealth and rank surrounded her, genius and youth had probably more charms for her than gold and fine living. Garrick was deeply smitten by her, and he seems for a time to have thought her worthy of an honourable love. For one season he kept house together with her and Macklin, and they were visited by his friends, Johnson and Dr. Hoadley among the number. It was thought he would marry her, but Peg's aberrations—her 'one female error'—grew too serious. She was in truth an incurable coquette. It was the old story of Lesbia and Catullus. Garrick's heart was touched, hers was not. It cost him a good many struggles to break his chains, but he broke them at last, and left her finally in 1745 to the rakes and fools who were outbidding each other for her favours.

He was worthy of a better mate, and he was to find one before very long; for in March of the following year (1746) the lady came to England who was to replace his feverish passion for the wayward Woffington by a devotion which grew stronger and deeper with every year of his life.

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This was the fair Eva Maria Veigel, which latter name she had changed for its French equivalent, Violette. She was then twenty-one, a dancer, and had come from Vienna with recommendations from the Empress Theresa, who was said to have found her too beautiful to be allowed to remain within reach of the Emperor Frederick I. Jupiter Carlyle, returning from his studies at Leyden, found himself in the same packet with her, crossing from Helvoet to Harwich. She was disguised in male attire, and this although travelling under the protection of a person who called himself her father and two other foreigners. Carlyle took the seeming youth for 'a Hanoverian Baron coming to Britain to pay his court at St. James's.' But the lady becoming alarmed by a storm during the passage, her voice, no less than her fears, at once betrayed her to Carlyle. This led to an avowal of her profession and of the object of her journey, and the young, handsome Scotsman took care not to leave London without seeing his fair fellow-traveller on the opera stage, where he found her dancing to be 'exquisite.'*

Such was the general verdict. The dancing of

* 'Autobiography of Carlyle,' pp. 183, 197. Twelve years afterwards Dr. Carlyle dined with the lady and her husband at their villa. 'She did not seem to recognise me,' he writes, 'which was no wonder at the end of twelve years, having thrown away my bag-wig and sword, and appearing in my own grisly hairs and in parson's clothes.'

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those days was not a thing in which every womanly feeling, every refined grace, was violated. It aspired to delight by the poetry of motion, not to amaze by complexities of distortion or brilliant marvels of muscular force. Beautiful, modest, accomplished, the Violette not only charmed on the stage, but soon found her way into fashionable society. So early as June, 1746, Horace Walpole writes to his friend Montague: 'The fame of the Violette increases daily. The sister Countesses of Burlington and Talbot exert all their stores of sullen partiality and competition for her.' The Countess of Burlington took her to live with her, and was in the habit of attending her to the theatre, and waiting at the side-wings to throw a shawl over her as she left the stage.

These attentions, due solely to the charm of the young lady and the enthusiasm of her patroness, were quite enough to set in motion the tongues of the Mrs. Candours and Sir Benjamin Backbites of society. The Violette, they began to whisper, was a daughter of Lord Burlington, by a Florentine of rank; and when, upon her marriage with Garrick in 1749, she received a handsome marriage portion from the Countess, this was considered conclusive evidence of the scandal. It was not, however, from the Earl, but from the Countess, that the dowry came. It consisted of a sum of £5,000, secured on one of her ladyship's Lincolnshire estates; Garrick on his part settling £10,000 on

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his bride, with £70 a year of pin-money.* It is quite possible that the security for £5,000 granted by the Countess was simply an equivalent for some such sum previously handed over to her by the young lady. But the parties kept their own counsel in their arrangements, and so left the busy-bodies at fault. 'The chapter of this history is a little obscure and uncertain as to the protecting Countess, and whether she gives her a fortune or not,' Horace Walpole wrote out to a friend in Florence a few days after the marriage, and speculation has since gone on mystifying what was probably in itself a very simple affair. Who was the father of the fair Violette was a secret to the last, even to Garrick's relations. 'Lord Burlington was not my father,' Mrs. Garrick said late in life to one of them, 'but I was of noble birth' (Smith's 'Book for a Rainy Day,' p. 270).

The Countess, it is said, looked higher for her young friend than the great player, as a Countess with so celebrated a beauty in hand was likely to do; and it was not without difficulty that Garrick won what proved to be the great prize of his life. He had on one occasion to disguise himself as a woman in order to convey a letter to his mistress. But the

* The evidence of this is before us in a copy of the marriage articles, to which the Countess is a party. They are dated June 20, 1747, two days before the marriage, and disprove all that is said on the subject by Garrick's biographers.

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fact of her receiving it bespeaks the foregone conclusion that he had won her heart, and, that fact once ascertained, the Countess was probably too wise to oppose further resistance. How attractive in person the young dancer was her portraits survive to tell us. What her lover thought of her appears from some verses which he wrote in the first happiness of what we cannot call his honeymoon, for their whole married life was one honeymoon.

> 'Tis not, my friend, her speaking face,
> Her shape, her youth, her winning grace,
> Have reached my heart; the fair one's mind,
> Quick as her eyes, yet soft and kind—
> A gaiety with innocence,
> A soft address, with manly sense;
> Ravishing manners, void of art,
> A cheerful, firm, yet feeling heart,
> Beauty that charms all public gaze,
> And humble, amid pomp and praise.'

That this charming picture owed little or nothing to the exaggeration of the lover is confirmed by the uniform testimony of all who knew her. Wilks, no mean judge, called her 'the first,' and Churchill 'the most agreeable woman in England.' 'Her temper,' says Stockdale, 'was amiable and festive, her understanding discriminating and vigorous, her humour and her wit were easy and brilliant. Sterne, writing from Paris in 1762, while fully appreciating the beauties who thronged the Tuileries Gardens, said: 'Had she been there

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last night she would have annihilated a thousand French goddesses in one single turn.' Three years later he writes of her as 'the best and wisest of the daughters of Eve. She is his Minerva, whom he is prepared to maintain against the world as peerless. 'To David Hume,' as Madame Riccoboni tells us, 'elle rappelait au souvenir ces illustres dames Romaines dont on se forme une idée si majestueuse.' Beaumarchais speaks of her 'sourires fins et pleins d'expression.' To her husband Gibbon writes: 'May I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Garrick? By this time she has probably discovered the philosopher's stone. She has long possessed a more valuable secret—that of gaining the hearts of all who have the happiness of knowing her.' Horace Walpole drops his cynicism in speaking of her. 'I like her,' he says, 'exceedingly; her behaviour is all sense and all sweetness too.'

Of this 'best of women and wives,' as Garrick called her, he proved himself worthy by a lover-like wakefulness of affection which no familiarity ever dulled. During the twenty-eight years of their married life they were never one day apart. His friends were hers; where he went she went, and by the grace of her presence made his doubly welcome. 'His wit, humour, and constant gaiety at home,' says his friend Dr. Burney, 'and Mrs. Garrick's good sense, good breeding, and obliging desire to please, rendered their Hampton villa'—where he

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was a constant visitor—'a terrestrial paradise.' The *beaux esprits* of Paris were only restrained from throwing themselves at her feet by the unusual spectacle of a lover husband—'*l'heureux mari*,' as Madame Riccoboni calls him, '*dont les regards lui disent sans cesse*, I love you!' Even Foote, brutal in his contempt of constancy and the home virtues, was touched by the beautiful oneness of their lives. In February, 1766, when he was recovering from a terrible accident which cost him one of his legs, and, face to face with pain and sorrow, could listen to the dictates of his better nature, he wrote to Garrick: 'It has been my misfortune not to know Mrs. Garrick; but from what I have seen, and all I have heard, you will have more to regret when either she or you die than any man in the kingdom.' Seven years later, and when he had enjoyed the privilege of knowing her better, the same reckless wit, who spared no friend, however kind, respected no nature, however noble, and from whom, as the event proved, a thousand wrongs were unable to alienate Garrick's forgiving nature, wrote of the lady to her husband in these terms: 'She has the merit of making me constant and uniform in perhaps the only constant part of my life—my esteem and veneration for her.'

Singularly enough, the finest portrait of this charming woman is associated with Foote. It was painted by Hogarth for Garrick, and is now one of the Windsor Castle pictures. It presents Garrick

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in the act of composition, his eyes rapt in thought, and his wife stealing behind him and about to snatch the pen from his upraised hand. He is in the act of writing, so says the catalogue of his sale, his prologue to Foote's farce of 'Taste.' This supplies the date, 'Taste' having appeared in 1752, just two years after their marriage. The picture is the very poetry of portraiture. The character, as well as the lineaments, of both are there, and it needs no stretch of fancy to imagine Garrick on the point of illustrating the virtuoso's passion for the antique by the line—

'His Venus must be old, and want a nose,'

when his reverie is broken by the saucy challenge of as pretty a mouth and sweet a pair of eyes as ever made a husband's heart happy.

What Garrick owed to the happy circumstances of his marriage can scarcely be rated too highly. In his home he found all the solace which grace, refinement, keen intelligence, and entire sympathy could give. As artist, these were invaluable to him; as manager, a man of his sensibilities must have broken down without them. In 1747, two years before his marriage, he had, along with Mr. Lacy, become patentee of Drury Lane Theatre, to which his performances had been confined, with the exception of a second visit to Dublin in 1745-1746, and a short engagement at Covent Garden in 1746-1747. So well had he husbanded his means since

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his *début* at the end of 1741, that he was able, with some help from friends, to find £8,000 of the £12,000 which were required for the enterprise. Lacy took charge of the business details, while all that related to the performances devolved upon Garrick. He got together the very best company that could be had, for, to use his own words, he 'thought it the interest of the best actors to be together,' knowing well that, apart from the great gain in general effect, this combination brings out all that is best in the actors themselves.

On the stage, as elsewhere, power kindles by contact with power; and to the great actor it is especially important to secure himself, as far as he can, against being dragged down by the imbecility of those who share the stage with him. Sham genius naturally goes upon the principle of *ma femme et cinq poupées;* real inspiration, on the contrary, delights in measuring its strength against kindred power. This was Garrick's feeling. At starting, therefore, he drew round him Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Woffington, among the women; Barry, Macklin, Delane, Havard, Sparks, Shuter, among the men. Later on he secured Quin and Woodward, and, whenever he could, he drew into his company whatever ability was in the market. He determined to bring back the public taste, if possible, from pantomime and farce to performances of a more intellectual stamp. Johnson wrote his fine Prologue to announce the

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principles on which the theatre was to be conducted, and threw upon the public, and with justice, the responsibility, should these miscarry, by the well-known lines:

> 'The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
> For those who live to please must please to live.'

The public, as usual, fell back after a time upon its love for 'inexplicable dumb show and noise,' and Garrick had no choice but to indulge its taste. But in these early days the array of varied ability which his company presented, backed by his own genius, filled, as it well might, the theatre nightly.*

Garrick purchased his success, however, by an amount of personal labour, for which only his own passionate enthusiasm for his art could have repaid him. To keep such forces in order was no common task; to reconcile their jealousies, to conciliate their vanity, to get their best work out of them, demanded rare temper, rare firmness, and extraordinary tact. Even with all these, which Garrick certainly possessed in an eminent degree, his best efforts frequently provoked the spleen and shallow irrita-

* We have before us an extract from the books of the theatre, from which it appears that the net profits of the two first years of Garrick's management were £16,000. The nightly receipts, which varied from £100 to £150 when he did not play, invariably exceeded £200 when he did. Besides his share of the profits, Garrick received £500 a year for acting, £500 for managing, and £200 for extras.

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bility of those about him. Nor was it only the airs of his tragic queens that upset his plans and put his chivalry to sore trial. Woffington and Clive—one the fine lady of comedy, the other the liveliest of Abigails—kept him in continual hot water. But his *bonhomie* was not to be shaken; and when Clive had written him a more scolding letter than usual, he took it as a symptom of better health, and his salutation to her when they next met would be: 'I am very glad, madam, you are come to your usual spirits.' Even the fiery Kitty could not resist such invincible good-humour.

Of course, malicious stories in abundance were propagated against him, many of them due, beyond all question, to his very virtues as a manager. He worked from too high a point of view to be understood by many of the people who surrounded him. Excellence was his aim, and he allowed no one to trifle with the work he assigned them. Strict and elaborate rehearsals, under his own direction, were insisted on, much to the annoyance of some of the older actors, who had grown habitually careless as to the words of their parts. His own presiding mind arranged the business of the scene, and ensured *ensemble* and completeness. He took infinite pains to put his own ideas into the heads of performers who had no ideas of their own, so that his actors often made great hits, which were mainly due to the soul he had contrived to infuse into them at rehearsal.

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'Wonderful, sir,' Kitty Clive wrote to him (January 23, 1774), 'you have for these thirty years been contradicting the old proverb that you cannot make bricks without straw, by doing what is infinitely more difficult, making actors and actresses without genius.'

Again, on January 23, 1776, when the stage was about to lose him, she writes from Clieveden (Clive's Den, as her friend Walpole calls it) with her usual delightful heartiness:

'I have seen you with your magical hammer in your hand endeavouring to beat your ideas into the heads of creatures who had none of their own. I have seen you, with lamb-like patience, endeavouring to make them comprehend you; and when that could not be done, I have seen your lamb turned into a lion. By this, your great labour and pains, the public were entertained; *they* thought they all acted *very fine*—they did not see you pull the wires. There are people now on the stage to whom you gave their consequence; they think themselves very great: now let them go on in their new parts, without their leading-strings, and they will soon convince the world what their genius is. I have always said this to everybody, even when your horses and mine were in their highest prancing. While I was under your control, I did not say half the fine things I thought of you, because it looked like flattery; and you know your Pivy* was always proud; besides, I thought you did not like me then; but *now* I am sure you do, which makes me send you this letter' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. ii., p. 128).

* A friendly nickname, which appears to have been given to her by Garrick.

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It was only human nature, and not actors' nature especially, that Garrick should be pulled to pieces by the very members of his company to whom he had been most serviceable. Obsequiously servile to his face, behind his back they persecuted him with the shafts of slander. 'I have not always,' as he wrote in 1764, 'met with gratitude in a playhouse.' These were the people who whispered about that he was not the great actor the world supposed, but that he maintained his pre-eminence by stifling the gifts of other people, and letting nobody have a chance of popularity but himself. This was singularly untrue. All other considerations apart, Garrick was too good a man of business not to make the very best use he could of the abilities of his company. An opposite course meant empty houses and a failing exchequer, besides double work to himself as an actor. As he wrote to Mrs. Pritchard's husband (July 11, 1747), in answer to some querulous suspicions that she was to be sacrificed to Mrs. Cibber:

'It is my interest (putting friendship out of the case) that your wife should maintain her character upon the stage; if she does not, shall not the managers be great losers? . . . I have a great stake, and must secure my property and my friends to the best of my judgment.'

But Garrick was also governed by higher motives. He had a true artist's delight in excellence, and a kind-hearted man's sympathy with well-merited

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success. His whole relations to his actors prove this. Nor has a word of blame on this score been left on record against him by any of his really great compeers, such as Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Woffington, Quin, Barry, Sheridan, King, Smith, or Weston. The charge rests upon the insinuations of the smaller fry of players, egotists like Mrs. Bellamy or Tate Wilkinson, who charged him with the meanness which was congenial to their own instincts.

Horace Walpole, delighting as usual in detraction, echoed their complaints of Garrick's 'envy and jealousy'; and Mrs. Siddons very unwisely encouraged the charge by insinuating that her comparative failure during her first engagement in London, in 1775-1776, was due to this cause. After she had become the rage of the town in 1782, three years after Garrick's death, her answer, when questioned as to her relations with him, according to Walpole, was to the effect that 'he did nothing but put her out; that he told her she moved her right hand, when it should have been her left. In short, I found I must not shade the tip of his nose.' This was an ingenious way of accounting for that being so indifferent in 1776 which the town was raving about in 1782. But what are the facts? In that first engagement Mrs. Siddons, recently a mother, was weak and much out of health; most certainly she gave no evidence of the remarkable powers which she afterwards developed. Yet she

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was so especially favoured by the manager that she got the name of Garrick's Venus. At that time he had in his theatre two actresses, Mrs. Yates and Miss Younge, both justly high in favour with the town ; yet he put Mrs. Siddons into several of their parts, and selected her to act with him repeatedly in his farewell performances—a distinction of infinite value to so young an actress. Garrick obviously liked and took pains with her, and his suggestions could not have been otherwise than beneficial to a performer whose Lady Anne, in 'Richard III.,' was pronounced by the London magazine of the day to be 'lamentable.' And no doubt she did profit by them, although she had not the generosity to own it. Well might Garrick say, 'I have not always met with gratitude in a playhouse.'

But, in truth, Garrick never had any real cause to be either envious or jealous of anyone. The success of his rivals Quin, Barry, Sheridan, Mossop, never dimmed the splendour of his own for one hour. His only dangerous rival as to popularity at any time was Powell, and this popularity, as the event proved, was chiefly due to the fact that Garrick was out of England for the time. 'A substitute shines brightly as a king until a king be by.' Worn out with the fatigues of his profession, Garrick had gone abroad in September, 1763, to make the grand tour. The previous summer he had come across Powell, then a merchant's clerk in the city, and had taken great pains to instruct him.

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Such was his promise that Garrick engaged him to play the juvenile tragedy parts in his absence. Powell had a good voice and figure, and considerable power of tragic expression, and he became a great favourite, filling Drury Lane, and enabling Lacy to write abroad to his brother manager, that they were doing so well he need be in no hurry to return. Garrick would have been more than mortal had such tidings been altogether welcome. No one likes to think he is not missed in the circle of which he has been the 'observed of all observers,' least of all an actor, ever too conscious of the fickleness of popular favour, and naturally loth to resign his hold upon the public. But we find no trace of either jealousy or chagrin on Garrick's part. On the contrary, he was annoyed at Powell for endangering his reputation by playing mere fustian:

'I am very angry with Powell,' he writes to Colman, 'for playing that detestable part of *Alexander;* every genius must despise such fustian. *If a man can act it well, I mean, to please the people, he has something in him that a good actor should not have. He might have served Pritchard and himself, too,* in some good natural character. I hate your roarers. Damn the part. I fear it will hurt him.'

To Powell himself he wrote from Paris (December 12, 1764) in terms the generous warmth of which it is impossible to mistake, that the news of his great success had given him 'a very sensible pleasure.' The gratitude which Powell had expressed for 'what little service' he had done him by his

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instructions last summer 'has attached me to you as a man who shall always have my best wishes for his welfare, and my best endeavours to promote it.' He warns him against playing too many parts, and the dangers of haste:

'Give to study, and an accurate consideration of your characters, those hours which young men too generally give to their friends and flatterers. . . . When the public has marked you for a favourite (and their favour must be purchased with sweat and labour), *you may choose what company you please, and none but the best can be of service to you.*'

The admirable words with which he concludes this letter cannot be too often quoted:

'The famous *Baron* of France used to say that an actor "*should be nursed in the lap of queens*," by which he means that the best accomplishments were necessary to form a great actor. *Study hard, my friend, for seven years, and you may play the rest of your life.* . . . Never let your Shakespeare be out of your hands; keep him about you as a charm; the more you read him, the more you will like him, and the better you will act him. . . . Guard against splitting the ears of the groundlings —do not sacrifice your taste and feelings to the applause of the multitude; *a true genius will convert an audience to his manner, rather than be converted by them to what is false and unnatural*' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 177).

Powell was not 'a true genius.' There is weakness in every line of his comely face, as we see it in

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the fine mezzotint by Dixon after Laurenson, and he did not profit by these golden precepts. He had sensibility, which ran over into the extreme of lachrymose weakness on the one hand and of furious rant on the other. Intellectual culture, which alone might have cured this defect, he made no effort to obtain, and growing too well satisfied with himself to serve in the ranks, he deserted to Covent Garden, to Garrick's great vexation, and died soon afterwards at Bath (July 3, 1769) of a raging fever, at the age of thirty-two.

Much as Garrick was worried by his actors, the fraternity of authors caused him even greater disgust. Every scribbler who had put together something he chose to call a play thought himself entitled to regard the refusal of his rubbish as a personal wrong, dictated by the meanest motives. Garrick's weak dread of the power of this class of persons to injure him by attacks in the press constantly led him to act in defiance of his sounder judgment. Men like Murphy avowedly traded on this weakness. 'That gentleman,' says Tate Wilkinson, with his wonted elegance, 'could tease his soul and gall his gizzard, whenever he judged himself wronged,' his means being, in Murphy's own words, 'a fierce campaign' in the papers.

Garrick was, moreover, too sensitive himself not to be tender to the sensitiveness of an author. Often, therefore, when his answer should have been a simple refusal, he would give a qualified denial,

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which was used to justify further importunity, or a complaint of injustice when the decided negative came, as it often did come at last. The insolence of tone assumed by these writers towards Garrick is indeed incredible. It constantly implied the question, What right had a mere player to sit in judgment upon their literary skill? The gifted creature who had compiled five acts of dreary morality or fiery fustian was not to be amenable to the puppet to whom he offered the honour of mouthing it. If a refusal came, although accompanied as it generally was by a letter of criticism, admirable for literary acumen and rich with the experience of years of practical study of the stage, it was set down to jealousy, or private dislike, or some other contemptible motive. Horace Walpole was only echoing the complaints of this class of persons when, in writing to his friend Montague about his own impossible play of 'The Mysterious Mother,' he said (April 15, 1768):

'Nor am I disposed to expose myself to the impertinences of that jackanapes Garrick,* *who lets nothing appear but his own wretched stuff, or that of creatures still duller, who suffer him to alter their pieces as he pleases.*'

* Yet did Walpole, in 1775, present the great player with a beautifully-chased gold repeater, which we saw in the possession of the late well-known bookseller, Mr. Toovey, of 177, Piccadilly, inscribed in a circle round Walpole's crest 'Horace Walpole to his esteemed friend David Garrick 1775.'

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By passages such as these much wrong has been done to Garrick's reputation for fairness. His assailants and detractors, it must be remembered, have always had the command of the press, and much of their abuse, by sheer dint of repetition, has stuck to his name. Garrick's real mistake was in putting on the stage and wasting his own and his actors' powers upon too many bad pieces. Did he refuse any that have lived? Not one, except 'The Good-natured Man' of Goldsmith. He offered to play 'She Stoops to Conquer'; and, although these pieces are now classical, let it not be forgotten, so contrary were they to the prevailing taste, that on their first production they narrowly escaped being damned. '"She Stoops to Conquer," a comedy!' says Walpole; 'no, it is the lowest of farces!'

One instance will suffice to show how unfairly Garrick was treated in matters of this sort. He refused Home's 'Tragedy of Douglas' 'as totally unfit for the stage.' Home's Edinburgh friends were indignant, and went into absurd raptures about the piece, when it was soon afterwards produced on their local boards. Even Sir Walter Scott, writing seventy years afterwards, cannot deal with the subject without insinuating that Garrick refused the piece because there was no part in it in which he could appear with advantage![*] And Jupiter Carlyle, alluding to Garrick's subsequent

* 'Miscellaneous Works,' vol. xix., p. 309.

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kindness to Home, chooses to find the explanation of it in the fact that 'he had observed what a hold Home had got of Lord Bute, and, by his means, of the Prince of Wales.' But Carlyle suppresses what he must have known, that Home altered his play materially to cure the defects Garrick had pointed out, and that all Lord Bute's influence, if he had any, was brought to bear on Garrick before he rejected the play. It was through Lord Bute the play was sent to him, and the following portions of a letter from Garrick to his lordship, once in the writer's possession, establish conclusively that, whether right or wrong in his decision, Garrick came to it solely on the literary merits of the piece, and took unusual pains to point out its defects. Only a regard for Home would have induced him to do so.

'*July ye* 10*th*, 1756.

'My Lord,

'It is with the greatest uneasiness that I trouble your Lordship with my sentiments of Mr. Hume's tragedy. The little knowledge I had of him gave me the warmest inclination to serve him, which I should have done most sincerely had the means been put into my hands; but upon my word and credit it is not in my power to introduce *Douglas* upon the stage with the least advantage to the author and the managers.

* * * * *

'I am obliged, my Lord, to be free in the delivery of my opinion upon this subject, as I think both Mr. Hume's and my reputation concern'd in it: I should have had the highest pleasure in forwarding any performance which yr. Lordship should please

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to recommend; but nobody knows so well as you do that all the endeavours of a patron and the skill of a manager will avail nothing, if the dramatic requisites and tragic force are wanting.

* * * * *

'The story is radically defective and most improbable in those circumstances which produce the dramatic action—for instance, Lady Barnet* continuing seven years together in the melancholy, miserable state just as if it happen'd the week before, without discovering the real cause; and on a sudden opening the whole affair to *Anna* without any stronger reason than what might have happen'd at any other time since the day of her misfortunes. This, I think, which is the foundation of the whole, weak and unaccountable. The two first acts pass in tedious narratives, without anything of moment being plan'd or done. The introducing *Douglas* is the chief circumstance; and yet, as it is manag'd, it has no effect. It is romantic for want of those probable strokes of art which the first poets make use of to reconcile strange events to the minds of an audience. *Lady Barnet's* speaking to *Glenalvon* immediately in behalf of *Randolph*, forgetting her own indelible sorrows, and *Glenalvon's* suspicions and jealousy upon it (without saying anything of *his* violent love for the lady, who cannot be of a love-inspiring age), are premature and unnatural. But these and many other defects, which I will not trouble yr. Lordp. with, might be palliated and alter'd perhaps; but the unaffecting conduct of the whole, and which will always be the case when the story is rather told than represented; when the characters do not talk or behave suitably to the passions imputed to them, and the situation in which they are placed; when the events are such

* Afterwards changed by Home to Lady Randolph.

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as cannot naturally be suppos'd to rise; and the language is too often below the most familiar dialogue; these are the insurmountable objections which, in my opinion, will ever make *Douglas* unfit for the stage. In short, there is no one character or passion which is strongly interesting and supported through the five acts. *Glenalvon* is a villain without plan or force. He raises our expectations in a soliloquy at the first, but sinks ever after. *Lord Barnet* is unaccountably work'd upon by *Glenalvon*, and the youth is unaccountably attack'd by *Lord Barnet*, and loses his life for a suppos'd injury which he has done to him, whose life he just before preserv'd. And what is this injury? Why, love for a lady who is old enough to be his mother, whom he has scarcely seen, and with whom it was impossible to *indulge* any passion, there not being time, from his entrance to his death, ev'n to *conceive* one.

'I have consider'd the performance by myself; and I have read it to a friend or two with all the energy and spirit I was master of, but without the wish'd for effect. The scenes are long, without action. The characters want strength and pathos, and the catastrophe is brought about without the necessary and interesting preparations for so great an event.

* * * * *

'I have undertaken this office of critic and manager with great reluctance. . . . If I am so happy to agree with Lord Bute in opinion, it would be a less grievance to Mr. Hume to find my sentiments of his play not contradicted by so well-known a judge of theatrical compositions.

'I am, my Lord, yr. Lordship's most humble and most obedt. servant,

'D. GARRICK.'

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The verdict of our own day, at least, will be with Garrick; for although the play had a great success in Scotland, partly from local feeling and more from the fact that the author was driven by the bigots out of the Church for having written it; and although the grand voice and presence of Mrs. Siddons kept it for many years upon the stage, it has long since disappeared, beyond the powers of any actress to recall. In London it never had a great success, and even when first produced at Covent Garden, in March, 1757, with its northern fame fresh upon it, and supported by Barry and Mrs. Woffington, Tate Wilkinson tells us 'the play pleased, but no more.' Goldsmith, in the *Monthly Review*, practically confirmed Garrick's opinion. Gray and David Hume, the historian, had cried up the play as a 'masterpiece.' 'Mediocrity' was the highest praise even the good-natured Goldsmith could allow.

In general Garrick's tact in divining what would or would not go down with the public was unfailing. Dr. Brown, the author of 'Barbarossa' and 'Athelstane,' two successful plays, told Stockdale that, before they were acted,

> 'Mr. Garrick distinguished to him all the passages that would meet with peculiar and warm approbation; to the respective passages he even assigned their different degrees of applause. The success exactly corresponded with the predictions.'

No wonder, therefore, if authors eagerly availed

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themselves of this invaluable faculty, which Garrick was always ready to place at their disposal. These were, however, in the complacent Walpole's estimation, 'creatures still duller than himself, who suffer him to alter their pieces as he pleases,' and the whole tribe of 'the unactable' were ready to catch up and repeat the strain. Had Garrick's alterations been confined to the works of the Browns, the Francklins, the Hills, and the like, it would have been better for his fame. But he took to altering Shakespeare with what we, who are better able to estimate the workmanship of the great dramatist, can only regard as sacrilegious audacity. We must not, however, forget that if he mutilated he also restored; and, in making the alterations he did, he probably secured a warmer verdict for the whole piece, *in the then state of the public taste*, than if he had played Shakespeare pure and simple. 'The Winter's Tale,' for example, was cut down by him into three acts. But the play had for many years wholly vanished from the stage. To have played it as Shakespeare wrote it Garrick knew very well would never do. But it was worth an effort to get people's attention recalled to its most important parts—to bring Hermione, that purest and holiest and most wronged of Shakespeare's women, in living form before their eyes, and to elevate their taste by that most exquisite of pastorals in which the loves of Florizel and Perdita are set. That he acted on this principle is clear from the

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concluding lines of his prologue to the altered piece:

> 'The five long acts from which our three are taken,
> Stretch'd out to sixteen years, lay by forsaken.
> Lest, then, this precious liquor run to waste,
> 'Tis now confined and bottled to your taste.
> 'Tis my chief wish, my joy, my only plan,
> To lose no drop of that immortal man!'

No man in Garrick's position would now venture to write additions to Shakespeare. But are our own managers and actors less culpable when they elbow him out of his own pieces by omission or transposition of important scenes, by overdone scenic splendour, and by readings of his characters false to the spirit in which they were conceived? There may be worse things on the stage, where Shakespeare is concerned, than a garbled text. To Garrick, at all events, it is mainly due that the genuine text was restored to the stage. He knew his Shakespeare, not from acting editions, like Quin, Barry, Pritchard, and others, but from the original folios and quartos. With true literary enthusiasm he made a fine collection of first editions of all the great early dramatists, which, under the provisions of his will, now forms one of the treasures of the British Museum. Thomas Warton and George Steevens used it largely, and it was Johnson's own fault that it was not equally available to him for his 'Shakespeare.'

Garrick's sympathies with literature and literary

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men were very great. He formed a fine library, and not only formed but used it. He was well versed in the literature of Europe, especially of Italy and France. He wrote well himself. His prologues and *vers de société* are even now pleasant reading. He would turn off one of his prologues or epilogues in two hours. As a rule, an epigram —such as his famous one on Goldsmith—took him five minutes. There was no man of literary eminence in England with whom he was not on a friendly footing. 'It has been the business, and ever will be, of my life,' he wrote to Goldsmith (July 25, 1757), 'to live on the best terms with men of genius.' When such men wanted money, his purse was always at their command, and in the handsomest way.

Sterne, Churchill, Johnson, Goldsmith, Murphy, Foote, had many proofs of this helpful sympathy, not to speak of men of lesser note. And yet the two last were constantly denouncing his avarice and meanness. Happily, Murphy's own letters survive to convict him of injustice. To quote one of many: 'I am convinced,' he wrote to Garrick (September 20, 1770), 'that you look upon the loan of two or three hundred pounds to a friend as a small favour; and I am further persuaded that I am welcome to be in your debt as long as I please. Having said this, and said it from conviction,' etc. This letter was apropos of a sum of £200, which Garrick had lent him *without acknowledgment of*

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any kind. And yet this was the man who, from Garrick's death down to his own, went about saying, 'Off the stage, sir, he was a little, sneaking rascal; but *on* the stage, oh, my great God!' It is pitiful to think a good man's name should be at the mercy of such a creature.*

Foote's sarcasms on Garrick's parsimony are preserved by the anecdote-mongers. 'Stingy hound!' if we are to believe Tate Wilkinson, was Foote's favourite epithet for him. But Foote was constantly appealing to Garrick for money in considerable sums, and people do not go to 'mean' men for that. What is more, there is no instance of its having ever been refused; although no man had better reason to turn his back upon another. 'You must know—to my credit be it spoken—*that Foote hates me*,' he writes to Mrs. Montague, under

* Equally characteristic is the following letter from Murphy to Garrick (March 6, 1777):

'I began in friendship with you, and I am happy to feel that I end my career in the same sentiments. Jealousies have intervened, but I hope they are vanished from both our minds. From mine they certainly are, and it is with the greatest cordiality I thank you for your extreme politeness upon the last occasion that I shall present myself to the theatrical world.—Believe me to be, dear Sir, your admirer, friend, and most obliged humble servant, ARTHUR MURPHY.'

Garrick wrote the prologue to 'The Apprentice,' one of Murphy's earliest pieces, and the epilogue to 'Know Your Own Mind,' his last and one of his best. No man had more reasons for subscribing himself Garrick's '*most obliged* servant.'

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the provocation of a charge of meanness made at the table of a common friend. Yet, when Foote most needed help, all his manifold offences were forgotten, and Garrick stood by him with the most loyal devotion. 'There was not a step,' says Mr. Forster, 'in the preparation of his defence' against the infamous charge trumped up against him by the Duchess of Kingston, 'which was not solicitously watched by Garrick.' And to Garrick himself Foote wrote about this time:

'My dear kind friend, ten thousand thanks for your note! . . . May nothing but halcyon days and nights crown the rest of your life! is the sincere prayer of S. Foote.'

The iteration of this charge of meanness as to money, in the face of the clearest evidence to the contrary, has influenced even Mr. Forster into lending his countenance to it. In a note to his essay on Churchill he prints extracts from two letters by Garrick to his brother George, written from Paris, immediately after hearing of the poet's death, telling him to put in a claim for money lent to Churchill. 'Mr. Wilkes,' he writes, 'tells me *there is money enough for all his debts, and money besides for his wife, Miss Carr, whom he lived with,*' etc. 'You'll do what is proper; but put in your claim.' 'I think,' he says, in a subsequent letter, 'and am almost sure, that Churchill gave me his bond. *I asked him for nothing; he was in distress, and I assisted him.*' It is not easy to see why Mr.

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Forster should say, as he does, that he 'must sorrowfully confess' these letters 'bear out Foote's favourite jokes about his (Garrick's) remarkably strong box, and his very keen regard for its contents.' What would he have had Garrick do? Say nothing about his debt at all? Why so, when there was money enough, according to the statement of Churchill's bosom friend Wilkes, to pay everybody, and also to provide for those who were dependent upon Churchill? Perhaps, however, he should have waited for a few weeks in seemly grief for Churchill's death. But why? Garrick had no special cause to mourn for Churchill as a man. He had proved his admiration for his genius by very substantial loans of money on more occasions than one; and it is surely the merest sentimentalism to charge to an undue love of money the fact of his telling his man of business to look after a debt. In matters of business why are poets, or the executors of poets, to be dealt with differently from other people?

Johnson, by some of his hasty sayings, lent countenance to this imputation of parsimony. But at other times he did Garrick justice on this point, and that in very emphatic terms. 'Sir, I know that Garrick has given away more money than any man that I am acquainted with, and that not from ostentatious views.' Again, 'He began the world with a great hunger for money; the son of a half-pay officer, bred in a family whose study

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was to make fourpence do as much as others made fourpence-halfpenny do. But when he had got money he was very liberal.' Here we get the truth. The well-judged economy of the man who has his own fortune to make and is resolved to achieve independence will make him avoid idle expenses in a way which is odious to the very men who are ever ready to draw upon his purse when he has filled it by a life of prudent self-denial. 'To Foote and such scoundrels,' as Reynolds wrote, 'who circulated these reports, and to such profligate spendthrifts, prudence is meanness and economy is avarice.

Johnson was not always so just to Garrick in other things. He liked the man, and would suffer no one else to speak ill of him; but he never quite forgave him his success. He was himself still struggling for bare subsistence long after Garrick had not only become rich and a favourite in the first society of London, but was enjoying a European fame. Johnson was not above being sore at this, and the soreness showed itself in many an explosion of sententious petulance. When, for example, Garrick ventured to suggest some alteration upon the 'Irene,' which would have given a little more of that life and movement to the scene which is so much needed, 'Sir,' said Johnson, 'the fellow wants me to make Mahomet run mad, that he may have an opportunity of tossing his head and kicking his heels.' It was not

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to be borne that an actor should know better than an author how people were to be interested or moved. 'A fellow, sir, who claps a hump on his back and a lump on his leg, and cries, "I am Richard the Third!"'

Johnson was no judge of acting. So little discrimination had he, that he found 'a fine airy vivacity' in the Sir Harry Wildair of a country player, whom Garrick pronounced 'as insufferably vulgar a ruffian as ever trod the boards.' He had, moreover, the lowest idea of the actor's art. He was too short-sighted to see the varying shades of expression on the face, or even to judge of the beauty or fitness of scenic action. He regarded it, therefore, as a mere compound of mimicry and declamation. 'I never could conceive,' writes Walpole, in his accustomed strain of sublime puppyism, 'the marvellous merit of repeating the words of others in one's own language with propriety, however well delivered.' Johnson held the same opinion, and was not therefore likely to feel, what is nevertheless true, that higher faculties were required for playing Lear or Richard as Garrick played them than for writing plays like 'Irene.'

'A great actor,' as Madame de Staël said of Talma, 'becomes the *second author* of his parts by his accents and his physiognomy.' For this a kindred gift of imagination is obviously necessary. It is not enough that he shall be master of the arts

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of expression in voice, feature and action. He must also be penetrated by the living fire of a vigorous conception. The words to be spoken are *the least part* of his performance. He must have lived into the being of the person he has to portray, have realized the very nature of the man, modified as it would be by the circumstances of his life. Only then is he in a condition to give that completeness to the dramatist's work which words alone cannot convey—that crowning grace of breathing life which makes the creatures of the poet's imagination stand out before the common spectator with all the vivid force in which they primarily presented themselves to the poet's mind. A great actor's impersonation is, therefore, a living poem, harmonious from first to last, rounded and well defined as a piece of sculpture, as finely balanced as a noble strain of music, and it leaves upon the mind the same exquisite impression of completeness. Its details will all be fine. Silence will be more eloquent than speech, what is *acted* more impressive than what is said, 'each start be nature and each pause be thought.'

It was this power of becoming the man he had to play, this rare faculty of imaginative sympathy, which was the secret of Garrick's greatness. It was this which made Madame Necker,* no inapt

* Diderot, in his admirable 'Paradoxe sur la Comédie,' speaks of her as 'une femme qui possède tout ce que la purité d'une âme angélique ajoute à la finesse du goût.'

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judge, say, in speaking of Shakespeare to her friends in Paris, after she had seen Garrick act: 'Vous n'avez aperçu que son cadavre, mais je l'ai vu moi, quand son âme animait son corps.' It was the same quality in Préville which made Garrick say of him: 'His genius never appears to more advantage *than when the author leaves him to shift for himself;* it is thus Préville supplies the poet's deficiencies, *and will throw a truth and brilliancy into his character which the author never imagined.*' It was this power which enabled Garrick to move the hearts of thousands in parts which, but for his genius, must have sent an audience to sleep, and which explains Goldsmith's meaning when he says that there were poets who 'owed their best fame to his skill'—a line the truth and fitness of which those who have seen fine acting will at once recognise. But the actor who can do this does not owe his triumph to study and the accomplishment of art alone. These are, no doubt, indispensable; but he has his inspirations, like the poet—splendid moments, when he becomes the unconscious organ of a power greater than himself. On this subject Garrick himself has spoken:

'Madame Clairon is so conscious and certain of what she can do, that she never, I believe, had the feelings of the instant come upon her unexpectedly; *but I pronounce that the greatest strokes of genius have been unknown to the actor himself till circumstances, the warmth of the scene has sprung the mine, as it were, as much to his own surprise as that*

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of his audience. Thus I make a great difference between a great genius and a good actor. The first will always realize the feelings of his character, and be transported beyond himself; while the other, with great powers and good sense, will give great pleasure to an audience, but never

> '"Pectus inaniter angit,
> Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
> Ut magus."'

('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 359).

At the root of the genius of great actors, no less than of great poets, lies intense sensibility. Things which other men take coldly will send thrills of exquisite pain or pleasure along their nerves, and the strain on their emotions leaves traces of exhaustion little less than would be caused by real troubles. But this is the very condition of their excellence. 'If it was not for the stage,' wrote Mrs. Cibber, that great mistress of pathos, to Garrick, a few months before her death, 'I could wish, with Lady Townshend, that my nerves were made of cart-ropes.' So, when we read of what Garrick was upon the stage—of the colour that visibly came and went upon his cheek with the shifting passions of the scene; of the features that in every line became the reflex of the inward emotion; of the voice, whose very character would change to fit the part he was playing—we may be sure that such qualities implied great physical exhaustion, and great inroads upon health. Accordingly, throughout his life, and

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even very early in his career, he was often made ill by his work as to occasion serious anxiety to his friends.

'Hark you, my friend,' Warburton writes to him (January 25, 1757), 'do not your frequent indispositions say (whatever your doctors may think) *lusisti satis?* . . . I heartily wish you the re-establishment of your health, but you do not act by it with a conscience. When you enter into those passions which most tear and shatter the human frame, you forget you have a body; your soul comes out, and it is always dagger out of sheath with you' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. i., p. 78).

But it was just Garrick's 'conscience' which prevented him from taking his work easy. Whatever wear and tear of body it cost him, 'he gave the people of his best' always. Once upon the stage, he resigned himself to the sway of his inspiration, and his whole faculties were at its disposal. To Garrick acting was enjoyment, but no pastime. He told Stockdale that he was never free from trepidation and anxiety before coming on the stage. He had all the modesty and patience of genius, and took as much pains in preparation the last year of his performances as the first. He saw no one on the days he performed, spending them in meditation on the play of the evening; and during the performance he kept himself aloof from the other actors, still intent on the meditation of his part, and so that the feeling of it might not

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be disturbed. Knowing what we now know of the man, and his high estimate of his art, it is impossible to revert without disgust to an incident recorded by Murphy in his 'Memoir of Johnson.' One night, when Garrick was playing King Lear, Johnson and Murphy kept up an animated conversation at the side-wing during one of his most important scenes. When Garrick came off the stage he said, 'You two talk so loud you destroy all my feelings.' 'Prithee,' replied Johnson, 'do not talk of feelings. Punch has no feelings.' Of the many recorded outrages of which the great literary bear was guilty none is more inexcusable than this.

'The animated graces of the player,' Colley Cibber has well said, 'can live no longer than the instant breath and motion that present them, or at best can but faintly glimmer through the memory or imperfect attestation of a few surviving spectators.' There are many descriptions, and good ones, of Garrick's acting, but the most vivid pen can sketch but faintly even the outlines of an actor's work, and all the finest touches of his art necessarily perish with the moment. Of Garrick, however, we get some glimpses of a very lifelike kind from the letters of Lichtenberg, the celebrated Hogarthian critic, to his friend Boie.* Lichtenberg saw Garrick in the autumn of 1775,

* Lichtenberg's 'Vermischte Schriften.' Göttingen, 1844, vol. iii.

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when he was about to leave the stage, in Abel Drugger, in Archer in the 'Beaux Stratagem,' in Sir John Brute in the 'Provoked Wife,' in Hamlet, in Lusignan in Aaron Hill's version of 'Zaire,' and in Don Leon in Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Rule a Wife and Have a Wife.' He brought to the task of chronicler powers of observation and a critical faculty scarcely second to that of Lessing. Every word of what he says has value, but we must be content with translating only a few passages.

'What is it,' he writes, 'which gives to this man his great superiority? The causes, my friend, are numerous, and very, very much is due to his peculiarly happy organization. . . . In his entire figure, movements, and bearing, Mr. Garrick has a something which I have seen twice in a modified degree among the few Frenchmen I have known, but which I have never met with among the many Englishmen who have come under my notice. In saying this, I mean Frenchmen of middle age and in good society, of course. If, for example, he turns towards any one with an inclination of the person, it is not the head, not the shoulders, not the feet and arms alone that are employed, but each combines harmoniously to produce a result that is most agreeable and apt to the situation. When he steps upon the stage, though not moved by fear, hope, jealousy, or other emotion, at once you see him and him alone. He walks and bears himself among the other performers like a man among marionettes. From what I have said no one will form any idea of Mr. Garrick's deportment unless he has at some time had his attention arrested by the demeanour of such a well-bred

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Frenchman as I have indicated, in which case this hint would be the best description. . . . His stature inclines rather to the under than the middle size, and his figure is thickset. His limbs are charmingly proportioned, and the whole man is put together in the neatest way. The most practised eye cannot detect a flaw about him, either in details, or in ensemble, or in movement. In the latter one is charmed to observe a rich reserve of power, which, as you are aware, when well indicated, is more agreeable than a profuse expenditure of it. There is nothing flurried, or flaccid, or languid about him, and where other actors in the motion of their arms and legs allow themselves a space of six or more inches on either side of what is graceful, he hits the right thing to a hair, with admirable firmness and certainty. His manner of walking, of shrugging his shoulders, of setting his arms akimbo, of putting on his hat, at one time pressing it over his eyes, at another pushing it sideways off his forehead, all done with an airy motion of the limbs, as though he were all right hand, is consequently refreshing to witness. One feels one's self vigorous and elastic as one sees the vigour and precision of his movements, and how perfectly at ease he seems to be in every muscle of his body. If I mistake not, his compact figure contributes not a little to this effect. His symmetrically-formed limbs taper downward from a robust thigh, closing in the neatest foot you can imagine; and in like manner his muscular arm tapers off into a small hand. What effect this must produce you can easily imagine. . . . In the scene in "The Alchemist," where he has to box, he skips and bounds from one of these well-knit limbs to the other with an agility so amazing, one might say, he moved on air. In the dance, too, in "Much

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Ado About Nothing," he distinguishes himself from all the rest by the elasticity of his movements. When I saw him in this, the audience were so delighted that they had the bad taste to *encore* their Roscius in it. In his face everyone can descry without much physiognomical discernment the bright, graceful mind upon the radiant forehead, and the keen observer and man of wit in the quick, sparkling, and frequently roguish eye. There is a significance and vivacity in his very looks which are catching. When he looks grave, so do we; when he wrinkles his brows, we do so too; in his quiet chuckle, and in the friendly air with which in his asides he seems to make confidants of his audience, there is something so engaging that we rush forward with our whole souls to meet him.'

A description like this, aided by the many admirable portraits which exist, enables us to see the very man, not merely as he appeared on the stage, but also as he moved in the brilliant social circle, which he quickened by the vivacity, the drollery, the gallant tenderness to women, and the kindly wit, which made him, in Goldsmith's happy phrase, 'the abridgment of all that is pleasant in man.' When Lichtenberg saw Garrick he was fifty-nine. But with such a man, as Kitty Clive had said of herself and him some years before, 'What signifies fifty-nine? The public had rather see *the* Garrick and *the* Clive at a hundred and four than any of the moderns.' His was a spirit of the kind that keeps at bay the signs of age. 'Gout, stone, and sore throat,' as he wrote about this

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period; 'yet I am in spirits.' To the two first of these he had long been a martyr, and sometimes suffered horribly from the exertion of acting. When he had to play Richard he told Cradock, 'I dread the fight and the fall; I am afterwards in agonies.' But the audience saw nothing of this, nor in the heat of the performance was he conscious of it himself.

It is obvious that Lichtenberg at least saw no trace in him of failing power, or of the bodily weakness which had for some time been warning him to retire.* He had meditated this for several years; but at last, in 1775, his resolution was taken. His illnesses were growing more frequent and more severe. People were beginning to discuss his age in the papers, and, with execrable taste, a public appeal was made to him by Governor Penn to decide a bet which had been made that he was sixty. 'As you have so kindly pulled off my mask,' he replied, 'it is time for me to make

* A man like Garrick was sure to be himself the first to know that he was falling short, or likely to fall short, of what he had been. Parsons, a valued actor of his company, his biographer writes, used to say that for some time before Garrick left the stage his powers were on the wane. 'Garrick,' he says, 'was doubtless aware of this unpleasing truth, and has often said: "Parsons, I will take my leave of the town, before its gradual absence whispers that falling off of which I am but too conscious. This is one of Johnson's good-natured hints, but I'll profit by it"' (Bellamy's 'Life of Parsons,' p. 19).

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my exit.' He had accumulated a large fortune. The actors and actresses with whom his greatest triumphs were associated were either dead or in retirement. Their successors, inferior in all ways, were little to his taste. The worries of management, the ceaseless wrangling with actors and authors which it involved, fretted him more than ever. He had lived enough for fame, and yearned for freedom and rest. At the end of 1775 he disposed of his interest in Drury Lane for the large sum of £35,000 to Sheridan, Linley, and Ford. 'Now,' he wrote, 'I shall shake off my chains, and no culprit in a jail-delivery will be happier.'

When his resolution to leave the stage was known to be finally taken, there was a rush from all parts, not of England only, but of Europe, to see his last performances. Such were the crowds, that foreigners who had come to England for the purpose were unable to gain admission. While all sorts of grand people were going on their knees to him for a box, with characteristic kindness he did not forget his humbler friends. An instance of this is before us in the following delightful letter from Mrs. Clive:

'TWICKENHAM,
'*June ye* 10, 1776.

'A thousand and a thousand and *ten* thousand thanks to my dear Mr. Garrick for his goodness and attention to his Pivy—for the care he took in

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making her friends happy! Happy! *That* word is not high enough; felicity, I think, will do much better to express *their* joy when they were to see the Garrick—whom they had never seen before. And yet I must tell you, your dear busy head had like to have ruined your good designs, for you dated your note Monday four o'clock, and to-morrow, you said, was to be the play. And pray, who do you think set it to rights? Why, your blunder-headed Jemy. I did not receive your letter till Wednesday morning; so they was to set out for the play on Thursday; but Jemy poring over your epistle found out the mistake, and away he flew to Mr. Shirley's with your letter, and the newspaper from the coffee-house, to let the ladies see the play was that day. This was between one and two, and Shirley ordered the horses to the coach that moment, and bid the Misses fly up and dress, for they must go without dinner. Dinner! Lord, they did not want dinner—and away they went to take up their party, which was Governor Tryon, Lady and daughter. Everything happened right. They got their places without the least trouble or difficulty, and liked everything they saw except the *Garrick*. They didn't see much in him. You may reverse it if you please, and assure yourself they liked nothing else. They think themselves under such obligations to me for my goodness to them, that we are all invited to dine there to-day, when I shall give you for my toast.

'I hope my dear Mrs. Garrick is well. I will not say anything about you, for they say you are in such spirits that you intend playing till next September. Adieu, my dear sir, be assured I am ever yours,

'PIVY CLIVE.'

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Before this letter had reached Garrick's hands—it is endorsed by him as received June 12—he had bidden adieu to the stage. On the 10th, the very day his old comrade was proposing him as her 'toast,' he had gone through that trying ordeal which, had she been aware of it, would have made her voice choke with emotion. The piece selected was 'The Wonder,' and it was announced, with Garrick's usual good taste, simply as a performance for 'the benefit of the Theatrical Fund.' No gigantic posters, no newspaper puffs, clamorously invoked the public interest. The town knew only too well what it was going to lose, and every corner of the theatre was crammed. In his zeal for the Charity of which he was the founder, and to which this 'mean' man contributed over £5,000, Garrick had written an occasional prologue to bespeak the goodwill of his audience in its favour. It has all his wonted vivacity and point, and one line—

'A fellow-feeling makes one wondrous kind'—

has passed into a household phrase. This he spoke as only he could speak such things. He had entire command of his spirits, and he even thought that he never played Don Felix to more advantage. So, at least, he wrote to Madame Necker eight days afterwards; but when it came to taking the last farewell, he adds:

'I not only lost the use of my voice, but of my limbs too; it was indeed, as I said, *a most awful*

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moment. You would not have thought an English audience void of feeling, if you had then seen and heard them. After I had left the stage, and was dead to them, they would not suffer the *petit pièce* to go on; nor would the actors perform, they were so affected; in short, the public was very generous, and I am most grateful' ('Garrick Correspondence,' vol. ii., p. 161).

To do consciously for the last time what has been the work and the delight of a life would agitate the stoutest heart; but to do it in the face of those whose sympathy has been your best reward, one would suppose almost too much for endurance. That Garrick felt this is plain. His parting words were full of feeling and solemnity:

'It has been customary,' he said, 'for persons in my situation to address you in a farewell epilogue. I had the same intention, and turned my thoughts that way; but I found myself then as incapable of writing such an epilogue as I should be now of speaking it.

'The jingle of rhyme and the language of fiction would but ill suit my present feelings.

'This is to me a very awful moment; it is no less than parting for ever with those from whom I have received the greatest kindness, and upon the spot where that kindness and your favour was enjoyed. (*Here his voice failed him, and he paused till relieved by tears.*)

'Whatever may be the changes of my future life, the deepest impression of your kindness will always remain here—here, in my heart, fixed and unutterable.

'I will very readily agree to my successors having

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more skill and ability for their station than I have had, but I defy them all to take more uninterrupted pains for your favour, or to be more truly sensible of it, than is your grateful humble servant.'

Then he retired slowly towards the back of the stage, keeping his wonderful eyes intently fixed upon his audience. Then he stopped, as though reluctant to look his parting farewell. The enthusiasm of the audience, no less reluctant, was broken by sobs and tears. 'Farewell! farewell!' burst from a thousand voices. 'Again and again his eyes,' writes one of his biographers, 'turned wistfully to that sea of sympathetic faces, and at last, with an effort, he tore himself from their view.'

And so without fuss or flourish—true genius and gentleman as he was—passed from the stage the greatest actor of modern times. In the short period that was left to him he was as happy as 'honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,' and his own keen relish for social enjoyment, could make him. He was courted and caressed by the best, the ablest, the highest in the land. At Court he had always been a favourite, and there was a talk of knighting him; this distinction, however, he declined.

'I should never have supposed it to have been of your own seeking,' writes Mrs. Pye (April 15, 1777), 'for it has ever been remarked to your honour that you never employed your ample fortune to excite envy and to make fools stare, but in the rational and sober enjoyment of life. However, I will not

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allow you the whole merit of this neither; most men's follies are owing to their wives, and you have a wife whose judgment is as near infallible as ever fell to the lot of a mortal.'

Another of the countless testimonies to Mrs. Garrick's worth. One of Johnson's many stupid sayings about Garrick was: 'Garrick, sir, has many friends, but no friend.' The man who was blest with such a wife wanted no other friend. As the charming Countess Spencer wrote to him (December 19, 1776): 'You, I am sure, can neither hear, see, nor understand without her.' With such a counsellor and companion by his side, Damon seeks no Pythias. Of friends, in the more restricted sense, no man had more. He seems never to have lost one who was worth the keeping. Pitt and Lyttleton, of whose praise he was so proud in 1741, were strongly attached to him to the end of their days. Lord Chatham, from his retirement at Mount Edgecumbe, in some scholarly lines, invited him to visit

> 'A statesman without pow'r and without gall,
> Hating no courtiers, happier than them all';

and Lord Lyttleton (October 12, 1771) wrote to him:

'I think I love you more than one of my age ought to do, for at a certain time of life the heart should lose something of its sensibility; but you have called back all mine, and I feel for you as I did for the dearest of my friends in the first warmth of my youth.'

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So it was with Bishops Newton and Warburton, with Lord Camden, with Burke—to whom he was always 'dear David' or 'dearest Garrick'—with Hogarth, with Reynolds, and with hosts of others. And, indeed, a nature so kindly, so sympathetic, so little exacting, might well endear him to his friends. His very foibles, of which so much has been made—his over-eagerness to please; his little arts of finesse to secure the admiration which would have been his without effort; that acting off the stage of him who was 'natural, simple, and affecting' upon it—were those of a lovable man. They speak of over-quick sensibility; and, balanced as they were by the finer qualities of generosity, constancy, tact, active goodness, by his wit and unfailing cheerfulness, they must even have helped to make up the charm of his character to those who knew him best. And then, as Johnson said, 'he was the first man in the world for sprightly conversation.' 'I thought him less to be envied on the stage than at the head of a table.' 'His conversation is gay and grotesque.—It is a dish of all sorts, and all good things'; a view which Burke incidentally confirms in a letter sending Garrick the present of a turtle, as 'a dish fit for one who represents all the solidity of flesh, the volatility of fowl, and the oddness of fish.' He shone as a talker, even in Paris, beside D'Holbach, Diderôt, Grimm, Marmontel, Helvétius, Crebillon fils, Beaumarchais, and the rest of that brilliant circle.

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Twelve years after Garrick's last visit there Gibbon heard people constantly exclaiming in the best society, with characteristic but pardonable vanity, 'Ce M. Garrick était fait pour vivre parmi nous'; and they claimed a share in his renown by reason of the French blood in his veins (see Appendix, p. 94).

Garrick did not enjoy his retirement long. While on his wonted Christmas visit to the Spencers at Althorp, in 1778, he was attacked by his old ailment. He hurried back to his house in the Adelphi, and after some days of great pain and prostration, died upon the 20th of January following. His death was a national event. His body lay in state for two days, and so great was the crowd that a military guard was necessary to keep order. His funeral was upon an imposing scale. The line of carriages extended from Charing Cross to Westminster Abbey, and the concourse of people of all ranks along the line of the procession was greater, say the papers of the day, 'than ever was remembered on any occasion.'* Among the pall-bearers were Lord Camden, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Spencer, Viscount Palmerston, and Sir W. W. Wynne. Sir Joshua Reynolds and all the members of the Literary Club attended in a body, eager to pay the last honours not less to the friend than to the great actor, who, in Warburton's phrase—it was also Johnson's—had 'lent dignity to his art.'

There were many sad hearts and many tearful

* For account of the funeral see Appendix, p. 95.

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eyes around the grave where 'the cheerfullest man in England' was to be laid to his rest. One who had done him much wrong by many an ungracious speech, we will believe, did penance in that solemn hour. 'I saw old Samuel Johnson,' says Cumberland, 'standing beside his grave at the foot of Shakespeare's monument, and bathed in tears.' Johnson wrote of the event afterwards as one that had eclipsed the gaiety of nations. He even offered to write his old pupil's life, if Mrs. Garrick would ask him; but, remembering the many savage slights Johnson had shown to him that was gone, she was not likely to make such a request. It might have been wiser, however, to have done so, than to leave his good name at the mercy of such little-honest chroniclers as Murphy and Davies, whose misrepresentations she despised too much to think them even worthy of her notice.*

In October, 1822, at the extreme age of ninety-eight, Mrs. Garrick was found dead in her chair, having lived in full possession of her faculties to the last. For thirty years she would not suffer the room to be opened in which her husband had died (see

* 'We stopped,' says Boswell, speaking of Johnson and himself, 'a little while by the rails of the Adelphi, looking on the Thames, and I said to him with some emotion that I was now thinking of two friends we had lost who once lived in the buildings behind us—Topham Beauclerk and Garrick. "Ay, sir," said he tenderly, "and two such friends as cannot be supplied."' Five years after Garrick's death, Johnson was laid in Poets' Corner, side by side with his old pupil and friend.

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Appendix, p. 95). Years wrought no chill in her devotion to his memory. 'He never was a husband to me,' she said in her old age to a friend; 'during the thirty years of our marriage he was always my lover!' She was buried in her wedding-sheets at the base of Shakespeare's statue, in the same grave which forty-three years before had closed over her 'dear Davie.'

APPENDIX

Note to P. 31.

It is interesting to note the number, the importance and variety of characters in which Garrick appeared within the first six months of his appearance on the stage. They were of all kinds—tragedy, comedy, farce. Here is a list of them:

	No. of Times.
Richard III.	18
Clodio ('Fop's Fortune')	12
Chamont ('Orpheus')	12
Jack Smatter ('Pamela')	18
Sharp ('Lying Valet')	24
Lothario ('Fair Penitent')	12
Ghost ('Hamlet')	2
Fondlewife ('Old Batchelor')	11
Coster Pearman ('Recruiting Officer') ...	1
Aboan ('Oroonoko')	2
Witwood ('Way of the World') ...	4
Bayes ('The Rehearsal')	16
Master Johnny ('The Schoolboy') ...	6
King Lear	11
Lord Foppington ('Careless Husband') ...	3
Duretête ('The Inconstant')	2
Pierre ('Venice Preserved')	4
Brazen ('Recruiting Officer')	1

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In all, 159 performances out of a season of 169 nights. Garrick's name first appeared in the printed bills to his tenth performance of Richard on November 25, 1741. He had two benefits during the season—the first upon December 2, 1741, and the second on March 18 following, when he played 'King Lear' and 'The Schoolboy.' The bill for his first benefit runs thus:

'For the Benefit of MR. GARRICK, who performed King Richard at the late Theatre in Goodman's Fields,

Next Wednesday, the 2d. of December, 1741,

Will be performed a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music divided in two parts;

Pit and Boxes laid together at 4s.; Gallery, 1s. 6d.

'Between the two parts of the Concert will be presented a tragedy call'd *The Fair Penitent*, the part of *Lothario* by Mr. Garrick, being the first time of his appearing in that character, to which will be added *A Farce*,

'Both which will be performed gratis by persons for their diversion.

'Tickets to be had at the Bedford Coffee House, Covent Garden; Tom's in Cornhill; Carey's in the Minories; and at Mr. Garrick's Lodgings in Mansfield Street, Goodman's Fields.

'NOTE.—The Stage will be commodiously built up after the manner of an Amphitheatre; and servants will be allow'd to keep places in it, who are desired to be there by three o'clock.'

NOTE TO P. 22.

The building, which had been Giffard's Theatre in 1741, was only 88 feet long outside the walls, and inside the walls 47 feet wide. The pit was 30 feet wide, and had a depth of

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15 feet, with only seven rows of seats. There were two rows of side boxes, and five of boxes behind the pit. The depth of the stage was 47 feet 6 inches, and the width across at the first wings 20 feet 6 inches. There was a gallery above the boxes. But the house, when filled to the uttermost, could have held only a very small number. The receipts during Mr. Garrick's performances seem to have averaged about £30 a night. This would give a receipt of about £5,000 for the 159 nights he performed at the little theatre, a large sum in those days.

Note to P. 90.

During Garrick's stay in Paris, where he was for six months, on his way back from a tour in Italy, he astonished the circle of philosophers of the *Encyclopédie* by his power of becoming, even on the floor of their salons, and on the spur of the moment, not the semblance merely, but the very character, either tragic or humorous, which he chose to illustrate. Thus Baron Grimm writes (July 15, 1765, vol. iv., p. 318, of the 'Correspondence Littéraire Philosophique et Critique de Grimm et Diderot,' Paris, 1829): 'Le grand art de David Garrick consiste dans la facilité de s'aliéner l'esprit, et de se mettre dans la situation du personnage qu'il doit représenter; et lorsqu'il s'en est une fois pénétré, il cesse d'être Garrick, et il devient le personnage dont il est chargé. Aussi, à mesure qu'il change de rôle, il devient si différent de lui-même qu'on dirait, qu'il change de traits et de figure, et qu'on a toute la peine du monde à se persuader que ce soit le même Garrick. On peut aisément defigurer son visage; cela se conçoit; mais Garrick ne connait ni la grimace, ni la charge; tous les changemens qui s'opèrent dans ses traits proviennent de la manière dont il s'affecte interieurement; il n'outre jamais la verité, et il sait cette autre secret inconcevable de s'embellir, sans autre secours que celui de la passion. Nous lui avons vu jouer les scène du poignard dans la tragédie de Macbeth, en chambre, dans son habit ordinaire,

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sans aûcun secours de l'illusion théâtrale, et à mesure qu'il suivait des yeux ce poignard suspendre et marchant dans l'air, il devenait si beau qu'il arrachait un cri général d'admiration à toute l'assemblée.' . . . Avec la même perfection il joue tous les rôles qui ont un modèle dans la nature; les seuls, qu'il ne sache pas jouer, sont ces rôles factices qui ne rassemblent à rien, et qui n'ont de fondement que dans l'imagination dérèglée et appauvrie d'un poète.' In the same volume Diderot speaks to the same effect.

Note to P. 91.

When Garrick died, his wife would not allow anything in the room to be moved. The door was locked, and for thirty years no one was allowed to enter. At last it became necessary that it should be opened. Mrs. Hannah More was with Mrs. Garrick at the time. 'When the door was opened,' she said, 'and the shutters unbarred, the room was actually darkened by myriads of moths, which rose from the mouldered bed and the hangings of the room. Every inch of the bed furniture was eaten through and through, and, on the air being admitted, dropped to pieces. The solid articles of furniture alone remained uninjured.'

Note to P. 90.—Garrick's Funeral.

The following account of Garrick's funeral from a newspaper of the day shows that nearly all the men of the time most eminent in politics, literature and art, were present in the procession from his house to Westminster Abbey. It is a remarkable record, reading which no one will say he was not worthy of a place in England's great Campo Santo.

The Funeral Procession *and* Ceremony *observed at the Interment of* David Garrick, Esq; *February* 1, 1779.

ABOUT a quarter after one o'clock, the company set out from Mr. Garrick's house on the Royal Terrace, in the Adelphi, and proceeded in 33 mourning coaches drawn by six

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horſes each, to Weſtminſter-abbey in the following order:

Four Porters with ſtaves.
State lid of feathers.
Six Pages.—[Hearſe full dreſt, with The BODY in a coffin covered with crimſon velvet, on which were the arms of the deceaſed, with this motto underneath,
RESURGAM,
And his name, his age, and the day and year of his death.—] Six Pages.
Six Horſemen with clokes.
The Pennon on horſeback.
Two Supporters.
Six Horſemen with clokes.
Surcoat, Mr. Evans, Treaſurer of D. L. Theatre.
Helmet, Creſt, and Mantle, Mr. Kirk, Houſekeeper.
State coach empty.
2d coach, four Clergymen, Dr. Hamilton, Rev. Mr. Wright, Rev. Mr. Bowyer, Rev. Mr. Eaſt.
Five coaches with Pall-bearers.
1ſt coach, Duke of Devonſhire, Lord Camden.
2d. Lord Spencer, Lord Oſſory.
3d. Lord Palmerſton, Hon. Mr. Rigby.
4th. Sir W. W. Wynne, Bart. Hon. Mr. Stanley.
5th. Albany Wallis, Eſq; —— Paterſon.
Chief Mourners.
8th coach, R. B. Sheridan, Eſq;
Two Train-bearers.
9th coach, Family Mourners, Rev. C. Garrick, David Garrick, Eſq; Nat. Garrick, Eſq; —— Shaw, Eſq;
10th. Phyſician and Apothecary, Dr. Cadogan and Mr. Lawrence.
Butler, Carpenter to D. L. Foſbrook, Book-keeper, two Horſemen with clokes.
Gentlemen of the Theatre, Drury-lane.
11. Meſſrs. King and Smith.
12. Meſſrs. Yates, Dodd, Vernon.
13. Meſſrs. Palmer, Brereton, Benſley, Moody.
14. Meſſrs. Aickin, Parſons, Baddeley.
Two horſemen in clokes.
Gentlemen of the Theatre, Covent garden.
15. Meſſrs. Mattocks, Clarke, Aickin, Baker.
16. Meſſrs. Hull, Lewis, Wroughton, Reinhold.

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17. Meſſ. Lee Lewes, Whitfield, Quick, Wilſon.
Two horſemen in clokes.

Gentlemen of the Literary Club.

18. Lord Althorp, Hon. J. Beauclerke, Sir Cha. Bunbury, Edmund Burke, Eſq.
19. John Dunning, Eſq; Dr. Percy, Dean of Carliſle; Dr. Sam. Johnſon; Dr. Morles, Dean of Furneſs.
20. Edw. Gibbon, Geo. Colman, Joſ. Banks, Ant. Chamier, Eſqrs.
21. Wm. Jones, Eſq; Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Hon. Cha. Fox, Wm. Scot, Eſq.
22. Dr. G. Fordyce, Rob. Orme, Eſq; Bennet Langſton, Eſq; —— Chetwynd, Eſq.
Two horſemen in clokes.

Intimate Friends.

23. Sir Geo. Cooper, Bart. Tho. Harris, Eſq; Sir Tho. Mills, Hen. Hoare, Eſq.
24. John Robinſon, Eſq; Gen. Hale, Geo. Harding, Eſq; Rich. Berenger, Eſq.
25. Henry Wilmot, Eſq; —— Rupert, Eſq; Rob. Adam, Eſq.
26. Rich. Cumberland, —— Calvert, Rich. Cox, Tho. Wyld, Eſqrs.
27. Rev. Henry Bate, Dr. Ford, Richard Tickel, Eſq; Thomas Linley, Eſq.
28. Nath. Barwell, Eſq; Geo. Ramus, Eſq; ſen. Hon. and Rev. Mr. Cholmondeley, George Ramus, Eſq; jun.
29. Wm. Whitehead, Eſq; —— Wilſon, Eſq; Dr. Burney, —— Airy, Eſq.
30. Mr. Tho. Forreſt, —— Parſon, Eſq; John Crawford, Eſq; Tho. Vaughan, Eſq.
31. —— Angelo, Eſq; Mr. Racket, jun. Mr. Racket, ſen. —— Churchill, Eſq.
32. Monſ. de Loutherbourgh, Mr. Bennet, Monſ. Texier, Mr. Becket.
33. —— Walker, Eſq; Thomas Johnes, Eſq; Mr. Noverre, —— Capel, Eſq.

Mr. Garrick's family coach empty; Captain Shaw's ditto, followed by the gentlemen's family carriages, to the number of 34, the coachmen and footmen in black ſilk hat-bands and gloves.

A party of the guards preceded the proceſſion to the church, where two other parties

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formed a line for the company to paſs through.

The whole of the company were not out of their carriages till a quarter paſt three, when on entering the church, the body was received at the great weſt door by the Biſhop of Rocheſter, Dean of Weſtminſter, who, attended by the gentlemen of the choir in their hoods and ſurplices, preceded the corpſe up the center ayle, during which time the full organ and choir performed Purcell's grand funeral ſervice. Arriving at the place of interment immediately under the monument of Shakeſpeare, in Poets Corner, the Biſhop performed the laſt ceremony of the church; the choir ſung another ſolemn ſtrain, and the remains were depoſited in a grave, doubly hallowed by a nation's grief, and the copious tears of private friendſhip!

After the burial ſervice was over, the mourners ſeverally quitted the Abbey, but did not return in form as they came there.

The concourſe of people of all ranks who aſſembled along the Strand, Parliament-ſtreet, and other places leading to the Abbey, to pay their laſt tribute to their deceaſed favourite, was greater than ever was remembered on any occaſion; and not a face was ſeen, that did not wear its portion of the general concern.

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WILLIAM CHARLES MACREADY

THE condition of a great actor's work is that it dies with him. Let him have put into it all htat lifelong observation and study, quickened by the creative energy of genius, can produce, he must still be content to forego the natural yearning of the artist for a hold upon the hearts and minds of a future age. With the 'dead but sceptred sovereigns who still rule Our spirits from their urns' he knows he can never rank. Of these Alfred de Musset, in his fine 'Ode to the Memory of Malibran,' has said:

'Jamais l'affreuse nuit les prend tout entiers.'

But with him it is different. Who shall preserve from oblivion the magic of voice, the charm of form, of look, of movement, and of gesture, through which his soul has spoken to his fellow-men with such resistless eloquence?*

* The day after the death of the great French actor Le Kain (February 9, 1778), Thouvel, his not unworthy successor, wrote in a letter to his fellow-actors, now preserved in the archives of the Comédie Française: 'Voilà donc où aboutissent trente ans de travail, trente ans de peine, trente ans de gloire; le cercueil engloutit tout en un moment; il ne

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Yet is he not without his consolations. No noble influence is ever wholly lost, and he may find compensation for the inevitable doom of his noblest creations in the assurance that the power of his genius, which has been reflected to him in the palpable emotion or ringing plaudits of his audience, has opened up to them a world of poetry and emotion which but for him they would never have known. His 'so potent art' has awakened them to a knowledge of their own hearts, 'shown them noble lights in their own souls.' It has lifted them for a time above the commonplace of their daily life; it has widened the sphere of their sympathies, flashed light upon the conceptions of the greatest poets, which has made them living realities, even for the unimaginative; and in doing this it has communicated impulses which may exercise a lasting influence for good on the lives of thousands. Happier, too, than many great poets and artists, the great actor has not to wait for his fame. It meets him face to face in the eager eyes, the hushed breath, the choking sob, the triumphant

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restera d'un talent souvent sublime qu'une mémoire incertaine, que le temps effacera chez ceux qui la conservent, et qui ne sera qu'un songe pour ceux qui n'auront point joui de ses triomphes. Le peintre, le poète, laissent après eux des monuments de leurs travaux moins achevés dans leur genre que Le Kain dans le sien; ce qu'ils ont fait du bien reste entre les mains de la postérité, et Le Kain ne laisse rien, même aux yeux de ses contemporains, qui atteste son mérite, et la profondeur de ses recherches.'

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acclaim of his contemporaries. Not in vain has he lived who owes such success to having wrought with a pure aim to turn to the highest account the special gift of genius. Even though his work die with him, he may comfort himself with the thought that its excellence lingers long in the traditions of the world, that no one can tell how far a good influence created by his own personality may spread and propagate, and that he will at least remain — how few even of the greatest in any sphere of action do more! — the shadow of a mighty name.

Great actors, as a rule, have accepted this condition of their existence cheerfully. They have not sought to keep their name and fame before the world by autobiographies or memoirs, but have left themselves and their merits to be dealt with by other pens than their own. In truth, there is little to awaken interest in the story of an actor's life. The successive steps in his career, the long apprenticeship in the practical study of his art, the passage from stage to stage, the gradual rise to eminence and fortune — all so interesting to himself — can have no attraction for any reasonable creature. The mature fruit of his toils, his impersonations, into which he throws himself with all that study and experience have taught him — it is with these alone that the public have any concern. The true artist on the stage, as elsewhere, will, above all, be a gentleman; and as he will shrink in his life from

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that vulgar curiosity—never more rife than in the present day—which seeks to penetrate into the private history and habits of those who, by the necessity of their vocation, live much in the public eye, he will be no less chary of ministering to this curiosity when he has passed away, and it can no longer wound his feelings or outrage his self-respect.

Hence it is that the greatest actors have added little to biographical literature. The most illustrious of our own stage—Betterton, Booth, Quin, Garrick, Barry, the Kembles, Young, Kean—have all kept silence. Some, if not all, of these could write well; and Garrick, the ablest of them all, had, as his letters testify, the very qualities to make him pre-eminent in this branch of literature. It is impossible not to regret that he had not found time to devote himself to it. What memoirs might he not have written! Of himself he would probably have told us little. But what sketches of manners might we not then have had! What anecdotes! what conversations of Beauclerk, of Johnson, of Goldsmith, of Reynolds, of Burke and Chatham; of Clairon, Le Kain, Préville, Molé, and other stars of the French stage; of Diderot, Maupertuis, Morellet, Marmontel, of D'Holbach, and all the brilliant society of Paris! What pictures of the leading men and women of his time!—and there were few whom he did not know, and know well. Above all, how might he have set in all the hues of life before us his great compeers on the stage—Quin, Macklin, Powell,

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Barry, Mossop, Sheridan, Weston, King, Mrs. Woffington, Mrs. Cibber, Kitty Clive, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Abington—doing for them what Colley Cibber has done for Betterton, for Mountfort, and Bracegirdle. What invaluable lessons should we not then have had in dramatic criticism! What hints to make the stage, as it ought to be, a school of manners and of high thinking, as well as the most delightful of amusements!

The great actors of France, it is true—Le Kain, Préville, Molé, Talma, and others—have left written records behind them. But in them little is to be found of their personal history. It is of their art, and not of themselves, they write; their memoirs being confined almost exclusively to illustrations of what the stage is capable, conveyed either in examples taken from other actors or in general propositions for the guidance of those who may have to practise or to criticise the actor's art. Nor could better guides to a just appreciation of that art be desired. They were proud of it; for they regarded it from the same high point of view as Voltaire, when he said of a genius for it that it was 'le plus beau, le plus rare, et le plus difficile des talents.' It was an art which in its perfection could only come of 'the gifts that God gives.' It could not, as the great comedian Préville wrote, be taught: 'A man must be born an actor, and then it is not a master he needs, but a guide.' Mdlle. Clairon, though herself open to the charge of too artificial

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a style—'elle est trop actrice,' was Garrick's comprehensive criticism, a fault from which at a later date she shook herself free—was equally clear on this point. 'I am aware of no rules,' she writes, 'no traditions, that are capable of imparting all those qualities of mind and sensibility which are indispensable for the production of a great actor; I know of no rule by which one can learn to think, to feel. Nature alone can give those faculties, which study, advice, and time may serve to develop.'* But though teaching could not make a fine actor, he was not, therefore, to dispense with culture and study. 'Fill yourselves with knowledge,' Clairon says elsewhere; 'be unremitting in the search for truth; by dint of care, of study, make yourselves worthy to educate your public, and constrain them to own, that you profess the most difficult of all the arts, and not the most degraded of mechanical crafts.'

Le Kain, himself an illustrious instance of the power and patience of genius to overcome the disadvantages of face and figure for a vocation where such disadvantages are most felt—that inexpressible something which made 'Pritchard genteel and Garrick six feet high'—writes eloquently in the same strain: 'Soul is the foremost requisite of

* 'Vois-tu,' wrote poor Rachel, when sinking under her fatal illness, 'pour étudier, il est bien inutile de parler, de faire de gestes; il faut penser, il faut pleurer' ('Madame de Girardin,' par Imbert de St. Arnaud [Paris, 1875], p. 263).

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the actor; intelligence the second; truth and fervour of utterance the third; grace and harmony of movement the fourth. To be thoroughly master of his parts, to know the force and significance of every line, never to lose sight of Nature, simple, noble, and affecting; to be assured that understanding is not to be acquired save by ripe meditation, nor practical skill save by persevering toil; to be always in his part; to use the picturesque with skilful reserve; to be as true in level speaking as in the great movements of passion; to avoid whatever is trivial; to make his pauses not too frequent; to let nobility of style be seen even across his lightest moods; to avoid jerkiness in speaking; to weep only when the soul is stormed and thrust in upon itself by grief; to show unbroken attention to what is passing on the stage, and to identify himself with the character he represents'—these are some, and only some, of the qualities which go, in the estimation of one from whose judgment there could be no appeal, to constitute the claim to be considered a great actor.

Those who thought so highly of their art were not likely to be otherwise than proud of it. They bore within them that which might well make them indifferent alike to the prejudices that refused them the social status conceded to other artists and to the Churchman's dogma, which denied to them, when dead, a resting-place in consecrated ground. The gift which made them great was Divine in its

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origin; and loving their pursuit, as they did, with the passionate devotion which was one main secret of their excellence, they felt it gave them a rank above conventional distinctions. They would not, if they could, have exchanged it for any other.

The sneer at the player's craft of some well-born fool, or of some professional pedant, what could it matter to a man who knew he could cope with the best in every honourable quality, and whose business in life was to make his fellows familiar with 'the high actions and the high passions' which make a poetical drama the best discipline of humanity? Nor were our English actors behind them in glorying in their vocation. On the statute-book players might still appear as 'vagabonds'; but the profession which our supreme poet had followed, and for which his best works had been written, could not be degraded by the reckless classification of an obsolete law. The opinion of society soon abolished the stigma: the actor who respected himself was sure of public respect. Whom, indeed, was it prepared to welcome more kindly, or to accept in its most intellectual circles upon a footing of more complete equality? And if in public any slight were offered to him, the support of his audience never failed him; just as it is upon record, that the house went thoroughly with George Frederick Cooke, in his memorable retort to a young officer in the stage-box, who had made himself conspicuous by interrupting the play: 'You are an ensign?

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Sir, the King (God bless him!) can make any fool an officer, but it is only the Almighty that can make an actor!'

It naturally, therefore, excited no small surprise, not unmixed with indignation, among the actors of the day, when, before the Select Committee on Dramatic Literature in 1832, presided over by Sir E. L. Bulwer, Mr. Macready, who had by this time taken rank with the leaders of his profession, spoke of it as one so 'unrequiting that no person who had the power of doing anything better would, unless deluded into it, take it up.' In a separate answer he disparaged it still further by saying, 'that persons who could find any other occupation would not take to one on which they were dependent entirely upon the humour of the public.' It was an ungracious speech, considering that the public had been kind to him to the full measure of his deserts. But it had a farther and deeper significance, because it showed that the speaker wanted the first element of greatness—a thorough faith in his art, as in itself worthy, without reference to the measure of popular appreciation or of money value. It was obvious from such a reply that Mr. Macready did not view his profession, as we have seen Le Kain do, *en grand*. His individual self was more to him than his art. Its followers were exposed to popular caprice. But what artists are not? Did Gainsborough, Constable, Romney, Müller—nay, did even Flaxman—rise to their

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true place in their own day? The return for their works in pounds, shillings, and pence was small. The artist in whose thoughts such things are uppermost may be dexterous, may be popular; but without the inspiration which seeks a vent, that will not be repressed, on the canvas, in the marble, or upon the stage, let the world requite him as it may, he will never be truly great.

The 'Reminiscences and Selections from the Diaries of Mr. Macready,' two volumes, published in 1875, are an instructive commentary on Mr. Macready's evidence in 1832. No one can read them without seeing that he had no special genius, in the right sense of the word, for the stage. Accident, not inborn impulse, took him there; and great force of will and a determined ambition carried him into a conspicuous place upon it, which his sound intellectual training and high personal character enabled him to maintain with honour. Whatever he had to do, it was his maxim to do thoroughly. The inspiration of genius was not within his command, but hard study and a certain fervour of style gave to many of his impersonations something that seemed to come near it. He worked at acting as he would have worked at jurisprudence or theology, had circumstances taken him to the Bar or to the Church. Under no conditions would he have been content to be lost in the common herd of toilers in the same field. But to the artist's delight

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in his work for its own sake, this book shows very clearly that he was a stranger. This fact, now placed by it beyond mere surmise, is to our minds the best justification of those who qualified their admiration of his talents by denying to him the attributes of an actor of the highest class.

While, too, this book did not raise the general estimate of Mr. Macready as an actor, it was unhappily not calculated to make the world think better of him as a man. Actors have an evil reputation for egotism and jealousy. No one ever lay more heavily under this imputation than Mr. Macready while on the stage. We have heard the greatest comedian of his time say of him: 'Macready never could see any merit in any living actor in his own line, nor in any actress either, until she was either dead or off the stage.' The indictment was sweeping. It expressed a general feeling on the part of those who came professionally into contact with Mr. Macready. But it would never have been known to the outside world but for the injudicious publication of diaries which he certainly never intended should meet the public eye.

From them it is apparent that, so little assured was Mr. Macready of his hold on public favour, or, to use his own phrase, on 'popular caprice,' that he lived in constant dread of being ousted from it by some new favourite. The echo of applause, unless given to himself, fills him with

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'envious and vindictive feelings.' The words are his own (vol. ii., p. 62). But for his own confessions, as here given, the extent of this weakness would have been incredible. Thus, when he was in the zenith of his reputation (August 29, 1837), he reads in the *Morning Herald* that Mr. Phelps has made a decided success. What is his comment? 'It depressed my spirits, though perhaps it should not do so. If he is greatly successful I shall reap the profits'—Mr. Phelps was then under engagement to appear in Mr. Macready's company at Covent Garden—'if moderately, he will strengthen my company; but an actor's fame and his dependent income is *(sic)* so precarious, that we start at every shadow of an actor. It is an unhappy life' (vol. ii., p. 88). By this rule nothing would have more thoroughly embittered his existence than a stage filled with performers of the highest stamp. No generous emulation, no triumph in the general exaltation of the drama, no delight in the display of genius or power in others, would compensate his hunger for exclusive predominance, for the comparative eclipse of his own star. And yet this was the man whose highest claim on the public favour was, as one well remembers, his professed desire to raise and dignify the stage![*]

* At the same time, it is quite certain that when off the stage—and his admirable judgment allowed itself fair play—Mr. Macready was always ready to admit the great importance to the actor of having good actors on the stage with him.

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It is typical of the same morbid egotism that, even when Mr. Macready is chronicling in these diaries the production of the numerous poetical plays which were the glory of his management at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, it is only of his own share in them that he speaks. No one would ever suppose that they were supported by a body of performers scarcely inferior to himself, and to whom, at all events, almost as much as to himself, their success was due. One illustration will suffice. Bulwer's 'Lady of Lyons' was produced on February 15, 1838, with a cast not likely to be forgotten by those who were present—Helen Faucit, Macready, Bartley, Elton, Diddear. But all Mr. Macready has to say is: 'Acted Claude Melnotte pretty well. The audience felt *it* very much, and were carried away by *it*, and the play in the acting was completely successful: was called for.' Again, when the play is repeated two nights after: 'Was called for; led on Miss Faucit, and was very cordially received'; as if the Pauline of the young actress, to whom the first success of the play and its ultimate hold on the stage were mainly due, had been of no account.

In truth, Mr. Macready could 'brook no rival near the throne.' If the main interest of any of the

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To Lady Pollock he said: 'It is the greatest help to have a great actor by your side; it is torture to act against bad acting—to be, as it is said, "ill-supported"' (Lady Pollock's 'Macready as I Knew Him,' p. 27).

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new pieces he produced was found on rehearsal or in performance not to centre in himself, it lost its interest for him. This was often alleged of him both by authors and actors; his own diaries 'give it proof.' Thus, when Bulwer's comedy of 'Money' is first put into his hands, he is charmed with it. He reads it to the Haymarket Company (October 24, 1840). 'It was quite successful,' he notes, 'with them.' A few days of rehearsals change the aspect of everything. 'As I write,' he says (November 4), 'doubts and misgivings rise in my mind. I have nothing great or striking in situation, character, humour, or passion, to develop. The power of all this is thrown on Mr. Strickland, and partially on Mr. Webster.' On December 8—in these days a month of rehearsals was not thought too much for a new play*—the comedy was produced. By this time Mr. Macready had apparently discovered that it was not only Mr. Strickland and Mr. Webster who might have the pull upon him, so he is 'very much depressed and low-spirited . . . Acted the part of Evelyn—not satisfied. I wanted lightness, self-possession, and in the serious scenes, truth. I was not good; I feel it. In the last scene Miss Faucit, as I had anticipated, had quite the advantage over me. This was natural.' If so, then

* 'We have had twenty rehearsals of this,' said someone at the end of the last rehearsal of Bulwer's 'Richelieu.' 'Then, I wish you luck at *vingt-et-un!*' said Tom Cook, the leader of the orchestra. His wish was more than fulfilled.

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surely it was a thing to rejoice in; and those who remember how admirably all the parts of this brilliant comedy were filled on its first production—a uniformity of excellence that secured for it the longest run of any play of the period—will be surprised to find that this circumstance was only a source of vexation to one who, both as actor and as the trusted friend of the author, might well have been glad of whatever brought the merits of the play into the highest relief.

Mr. Macready was always ready to urge upon the members of his company that it was the actor that made the part, not the part that made the actor; and we have heard him quote with warm commendation the reply of the celebrated German actress Schroeder to someone who remarked with surprise on her condescending to perform the unimportant part of Lady Capulet, the night after she had taken her audience by storm as Lady Macbeth. 'Condescend!' she replied; 'is it not Shakespeare I acted?*' Constant sacrifices of this kind were conceded to Mr. Macready. But what was a sound rule for others was apparently no rule for him. Thus, having played Friar Lawrence in 'Romeo and Juliet' one night (April 30, 1838), he records:

* Mr. Macready, apparently, was not aware that Mrs. Pritchard, the Lady Macbeth of Garrick's company, also played Lady Capulet to Garrick's Hamlet, and many other equally subordinate characters, although she was the leading lady of Garrick's company.

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'I find playing a part of this sort, with no character to sustain, no effort to make, *no power of perceiving an impression made*, to be a very disagreeable and unprofitable *task*. Having required many of the actors to do what they considered beneath them, *perhaps* it was only a just sacrifice to their opinions to concede so far.' How little of the Schroeder spirit is here! Lady Capulet has not one feature of dramatic interest. On the other hand, the character of Friar Lawrence is sketched with subtle skill, and he has at least one considerable speech of great beauty. But it is beneath Mr. Macready's notice, because it gives no scope 'for perceiving the impression made,' or, in plain English, for what is technically called 'bringing down the house.'

With strange inconsistency, the man to whom the plaudits of an audience were as the breath of his nostrils, who could do nothing without the stimulus of 'perceiving an impression made,' affected to abhor, and even to despise, the only profession in which this stimulus can be had. All through this book run lamentations at the untoward fate that made him an actor. That wretched old statute about 'vagabonds' poisons his existence. It is in vain that audiences cheer, that critics extol, that honours are showered upon him by statesmen and men of letters as the great regenerator of the British stage. He was not a gentleman by statute. 'The slow unmoving finger' of a purely imaginary scorn troubled his peace. Nor was this all. What might

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he not have done, he says, at the Bar, or in some other profession? The first satire of his favourite Horace might have taught him to cure himself betimes of that most foolish of all foolish habits, which makes men sigh for some occupation other than that which choice or destiny has assigned them. What a man does best may be pretty safely taken to be what he is best fitted to do. And Mr. Macready did his acting so well that, it may fairly be doubted whether he could have done anything else better, if so well. In his boyhood he was destined for the Bar; but, judged by his own confessions, he had neither the patience, tact, nor temper, without which no man need hope to make his way there. A disposition like his, so morbidly sensitive, so impatient of control, so dictatorial and supercilious, would have exposed him to sufferings far more acute in that career than any he had to encounter on the stage, where his temper made many suffer, who, being dependent on him for their income, had to bear with it as it would have been borne with nowhere else. Where else could he have hoped to secure so many of the prizes for which many excellent men have to struggle in vain? His place upon the stage brought him fame, a fair fortune, troops of friends in England, America, and France, among them many of the choicest spirits of his time, and the honours of more than one public dinner; and yet his diaries abound with such entries as this: '*February* 19, 1845.—I see a life gone in

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an unworthy, an unrequiting pursuit. Great energy, great power of mind, ambition and activity that, with discretion, might have done anything, now made into a player.' Or this, on July 1, 1843, when he has been to Westminster Hall to see the exhibition of Cartoons: 'Saw several persons that I knew, to whom I did not speak, as I did not know how far they might think themselves lowered in their own opinion by speaking to me.' And yet the same morning he had breakfasted with Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton), to meet Carlyle, Bunsen, Lord Morpeth, and several other people of the same class, not one of whom but esteemed him, and of course treated him as they would have treated any other gentleman of their acquaintance.

Can it be, is the question that again and again rises as we read passage after passage of this kind, that Mr. Macready seriously meant such revelations of personal foibles, if not of something worse, to be given to the public? Is it conceivable that a man should turn his diary into a confessional, in which to hold up in black and white before strangers' eyes his vanity; his overweening estimate of his own powers and importance; his vices of temper, of envy, of jealousy, of morbid pride; his grudges at fortune; his occasional misgivings about himself; his penitences and his self-reproaches? It may perhaps be well for him that he should write down there his appeals to Heaven for help against these and other besetting sins. But such revelations can

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scarcely have been intended for the public eye. They were infinitely painful, as we know, to many of his friends, who had been accustomed to think highly of a man in many respects so excellent and so distinguished. They teach nothing, because they are only one evidence the more of the ineradicable weaknesses and follies even of the wise. Surely, too, the taste is more than equivocal which dictated the publication of such prayers as are here recorded for protection against the vices of an overbearing temper, which, by the way, was always ready to break out with fresh vigour after every smiting of the breast, and cry of 'Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.' From ejaculations such as these one turns away, as one would from a private letter left accidentally open. What can be said of them but what St. Beuve says of similar pious outpourings in Madame Schwetzine's 'Memoirs'?—'Dès que la prière commence, la critique littéraire expire.'

Had the editor of Mr. Macready's papers used their contents as the materials for a biography, cutting remorselessly away all that is essentially private and unimportant or needlessly communicative, enough would have been left to make an amusing and instructive book. If he had been a little blind to the faults of his hero, so much the better; Mr. Macready's good qualities would then have stood out in probably truer proportion and relief. We should have thought only with

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pleasure of the old favourite, to whom we had owed many a delightful and instructive hour in the dreamland of the theatre. At the same time we should have escaped a host of details, with which the book is weighted, of where, and what, and when Mr. Macready played; how much a night he got; how his Macduff at one place was imbecile, his Laertes, at another, infected with the vice of the Court of Denmark; his Evadne, at a third, without brains or breeding; how much money was in the theatre on one night, how little on another; how at one time he was called on night after night after the play, or how, to his amazement, he was not once called on through a whole engagement; of petty squabbles, and prosy speeches—all that, in a word, may be dismissed as the merest chronicling of personal and theatrical small beer. Even the 'Reminiscences,' begun by Mr. Macready in 1855, and which bring down his story to the end of 1826, should have been weeded of a deal of stuff of this kind. He would indeed have done more wisely, we venture to think, if, like his distinguished predecessors, he had left the story of his life altogether in other hands. But no mercy should have been shown to the subsequent diaries. All that is really valuable in them would have gone into a comparatively small compass, and been worked up into a compact and animated biography. A work intended, no doubt, to keep alive the name and fame of Mr. Macready, has done it serious

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injury, and the opportunity was lost by its editor of adding an agreeable volume to the not too numerous list of good works that deal with the history of the English stage.

William Charles Macready was born in London on March 3, 1793. His father, the son of a well-to-do Dublin upholsterer, left the paternal business for the stage, and after running the usual career in the provinces, and playing for some time in London, became the manager of the Birmingham, Sheffield, and other theatres. He wrote the successful farce of 'The Irishman in London,' produced at Covent Garden in 1782, and seems to have enjoyed and merited the respect of the various towns where he flourished as a manager through a long life. His first wife, the mother of W. C. Macready, was also on the stage—a fact of which, oddly enough, her son makes no mention in his 'Reminiscences.' She seems to have been one of those mothers whose sweet influence penetrates the lives of their children, and haunts them like some holy presence. She died in December, 1803, and her son never speaks of her but with the deepest reverence and devotion. Doubtless he cost her no small share of anxiety, for in his childhood he was marked, to use his own words, by 'a most violent and self-willed disposition'—an inheritance from his father, in which the gentle mother must have foreseen a pregnant source of future trouble.

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Macready was one of six children. The family means were small, the parents busy; so while little better than an infant he was got out of the way by being sent to a day-school. Henceforth, he says, 'my childhood and boyhood were all school.' A preparatory school at Kensington, where the pupils were arrayed 'in uniform of scarlet jacket, with blue or nankeen trousers,' next received him; and from this he was removed to a school in Birmingham, where the master, a Mr. Edgell, a 'violent-tempered man,' who was confidently believed to have forsaken the tailors' shop-board for the ferule and the desk, did his best to make his pupil's bad temper worse, while initiating him in the mysteries of English grammar and Bonnycastle's arithmetic. But the future actor was even then foreshadowed in the fact, so commonly met with in the lives of players, not the greatest, that recitation was his forte. Milton and Young were two of his school-books.

'I had to learn by heart long extracts from them, from Akenside, Pope, and pieces from "Enfield's Speaker," including Sterne, Thomson, Keate, Shakespeare, etc., which have been of some service to me in accustoming my ear to the enjoyment of the melody of rhythm. To cure me of the habit of misplacing my *h's*, my dear mother, I remember, took especial pains; and in teaching me Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," the line, as I pronounced it, "'Appy, 'appy, 'appy pair!" was for some time an insuperable obstacle to progress.'

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He learned quickly, and retained what he learned. Pope's 'Homer' was got almost by heart; and its author became so great a favourite with him that long afterwards he prepared for his children, and subsequently published, an expurgated edition of Pope's works. The great London actors, when set free by the close of the London theatrical season, which was then a winter one, were available for his father's theatre at Birmingham. Here in the manager's dressing-room he had a glimpse of King, dressed as Lord Ogleby. The grand deportment and beauty of Mrs. Siddons were engraven on his boyish memory. The face of Mr. W. T. Lewis, the great comedian, also made an indelible impression on the boy; but of Mrs. Billington, all he could remember was the figure of a very lusty woman, and the excitement of the audience when the orchestra struck up the symphony of Arne's rattling bravura, 'The Soldier Tired,' in the opera of 'Artaxerxes.' He had the much greater good fortune to catch a glimpse of Nelson when, during the short peace of Amiens, the hero of the Nile made a tour of several of the provincial towns—'a recreation apparently innocent enough, but which was harshly reflected on in the House of Lords.'

'The news of his arrival spread like wildfire, and when his intention of going to the theatre got wind, all who had heard of it, as might have been expected, flocked there to behold and do him honour. The

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play was Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor," for the benefit of a player of the name of Blissett, who had some repute in the part of Falstaff. At my father's request, Lord Nelson consented to bespeak for the next night the play of "King Henry IV.," wishing to see Blissett again in Falstaff. The box office was literally besieged early the next morning, and every place soon taken. At the hour of commencement my father was waiting with candles to conduct the far-famed hero through the lobby, which went round the whole semicircle of the lower tier, to his box. The shouts outside announced the approach of the carriage: the throng was great, but, being close to my father's side, I had not only a perfect view of the hero's pale and interesting face, but listened with such eager attention to every word he uttered, that I had all he said by heart, and for months afterwards was wont to be called upon to repeat "what Lord Nelson said to your father." This was in substance to the effect that the universal esteem in which his, my father's, character was held in the town made it a pleasure and a duty to render him any assistance.

'Nothing of course passed unnoticed by my boyish enthusiasm: the right-arm empty sleeve attached to his breast, the orders upon it, a sight to me so novel and remarkable; but the melancholy expression of his countenance and the extremely mild and gentle tones of his voice impressed me most sensibly. They were indeed for a life's remembrance. When, with Lady Hamilton and Dr. Nelson, he entered his box, the uproar of the house was deafening, and seemed as if it would know no end. The play was at length suffered to proceed, after which was a sort of divertisement in honour of the illustrious visitor, from one song

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of which I can even now recollect one couplet! Oh sacred Nine, forgive me while I quote it!

'"We'll shake hands, and be friends; if they won't, why, what then?
We'll send our brave Nelson to thrash 'em again.
Derry down," etc.

The crowded house was frantic in its applause at this sublime effusion. Lady Hamilton, laughing loud and without stint, clapped with uplifted hands and all her heart, and kicked with her heels against the footboard of the seat; while Nelson, placidly and with his mournful look (perhaps in pity for the poet),* bowed repeatedly to the oft-repeated cheers. Next day my father called at the hotel to thank his Lordship, when Nelson presented him with what he intended to be the cost of his box, wrapped in paper, regretting that his ability to testify his respect for my father was so much below his will. My father never told me the amount, but purchased with it a piece of plate that he retained till his death in memory of the donor. I should not omit to mention that in the hall of the hotel were several sailors of Nelson's ship wanting to see him, to each of whom the great admiral spoke in the most affable manner, inquiringly and kindly, as he passed through to his carriage, and left them, I believe, some tokens of his remembrance.'

One of the elder Macready's theatres was that of Bolton-le-Moors, which in those days was regarded as a semi-barbarous place—not lighted, the dialect

* Surely not. The lines had the right ring in them—the faith in their hero, their faith in themselves, which carried the British nation through the fiery ordeal of that time.

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uncouth, the artisans given to fighting, and to winding up a set-to by a playful method of adjustment called 'purring,' in which the combatant, when his adversary was down, kicked him on the head with his wooden-soled shoe—a tradition of those heroic ages which Liverpool subsequently reduced to practical perfection. An incident recorded of Mr. Macready's visit to this place is characteristic of the loyalty, the almost family tie, which then bound the members of a theatrical company together. The great London manager, George Colman the younger, struck by the performance of three of Mr. Macready's actors in his own play of 'John Bull,' offered them high terms to go to his theatre in the Haymarket, and they resisted the temptation. 'My father stood on his dignity, and not having been first applied to, refused his permission, without which they all most loyally refused to treat.'

We get what may be almost called old-world glances of travelling, and of what were then mere hamlets, and are now flourishing towns, in the accounts of the boy's visits to Dublin; to Holywell, with St. Winifred's Spring, where 'the crutches suspended as votive offerings beneath the groined arches of the roof above it' testified to the miraculous power of its waters; to Chester, then, as now, swarming in the race week; to Leamington, 'then a small village, consisting only of a few thatched houses, not one tiled or slated, the Bowling-Green

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Inn being the only one where very moderate accommodation could be procured.' The failing health of Macready's mother drew her to the waters of Leamington. It was there he saw her last, when he set out with his father for Rugby, with all a boy's trepidations and reluctance to face the unknown future of a great public school. He fell there as fag under a very harsh master, 'a young Irishman of the name of Ridge,' and wrote home such piteous letters that his father more than once thought of sending for him. The mother, with a wiser sagacity, prevented this. Her boy was no worse off than other boys, and he had a kind cousin in Mr. Birch, one of the masters, who would not suffer him to be ill-treated. So there he remained, making a course through the school rapid beyond precedent, and attaining the fifth form in three years, 'from which advance he began to be sensible of a certain enjoyment of his position.'

It was one of the amusements of the bigger boys at Rugby to get up plays, and they were not likely to overlook the fact that the father of one of their school-fellows had a theatre no farther off than Birmingham. Here was an easy way to get at play-books and dresses, and these were readily furnished to them on the application of the manager's son. Some requital for such a service was due even to an under schoolboy. It was given first in the distinguished post of prompter. Higher honours followed; and Dame Ashfield in

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'Speed the Plough,' Mrs. Brulgruddery in 'John Bull,' the Jew in Dibdin's 'School for Prejudice,' and Briefwit in the farce of 'Weathercock,' a tolerably varied list, were the maiden efforts of the future tragedian.

Other excitements varied the school routine. Nothing was talked of but Bonaparte and invasion. The older boys went through regular drill after school hours with heavy wooden broadswords, 'their blue coats cuffed and collared with scarlet.' These were also the days of one of the maddest frenzies that ever possessed the play-going public. It was only in August, 1874, that its object died at the ripe age of eighty-three, 'a prosperous gentleman.' William Henry West Betty, the young Roscius, 'a miracle of beauty, grace, and genius,' as Macready calls him, and still a mere boy, was the theme of all discourse.

'My father had brought him to England, and his first engagement was at Birmingham, where crowded houses applauded his surprising powers to the very echo. In London, at both Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres, and throughout the whole country, "the young Roscius" became a rage; and in the *furore* of public admiration the invasion ceased to be spoken of. He acted two nights at Leicester, and on a half holiday, my cousin Birch having sent a note to excuse me and his eldest son from the afternoon's callings-over, at my father's request Tom Birch and myself were smuggled into a chaise and reached Leicester in time for the play, "Richard III." The house was

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crowded—John Kemble and H. Harris, son of the patentee of Covent Garden, sat in the stage-box immediately behind us. I remember John Kemble's handkerchief, strongly scented of lavender, and his observation, in a very compassionate tone, "Poor boy! he is very hoarse." I could form little judgment of the performance, which excited universal enthusiasm, and in the tempest of which we were of course borne along.

'. . . After the play, Tom Birch and myself got into our chaise, and travelling through the night reached Rugby in good time for "first lesson" in the morning.'

During subsequent engagements with the elder Macready the boys became playfellows; 'and off the stage,' we are told, 'W. H. Betty was a boy with boys, as full of spirits, fun, and mischief as any of his companions, though caressed, fondled, and idolised by peeresses, and actually besieged for a mere glimpse of him by crowds at the door of his hotel.' This popularity, like all similar fashionable crazes, was doomed to a sudden extinction. When he had reached manhood, the public turned a cold ear to him, and, as Macready thinks, unjustly.

'It seemed,' he says, 'as if the public resented on the grown man the extravagance of the idolatry they had blindly lavished on the boy.' His level speaking was not agreeable. 'A sort of sing-song and a catch in his voice suggested the delivery of words learned by heart, not flowing from the impulse or necessity of the occasion; but when warmed into passion he became possessed with the spirit of the scene, and in witnessing, as I have

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done, his illustration of passages with all the originality and fire of genius, the conviction was pressed upon me that if he had not had to his prejudice the comparison of his boyish triumphs, and the faulty manner derived from frequent careless repetition, he would have maintained a distinguished position in his maturer years.'

In 1807 Dr. Wooll succeeded to the head-mastership of Rugby. He was too indulgent; and there being no longer the same pressure on his industry as under Wooll's predecessor, Dr. Inglis, young Macready for a time fell back in his studies. Happily, he pulled up in time, and to retrieve what he had lost, would get out of bed when the house was asleep, hang up clothes against the windows to hide his light, and, with the help of strong tea, sit up to a late hour working at his Homer or Virgil. Dr. Wooll varied the exercises of the elder boys by introducing the composition of English verses; and in addition to the prizes for these and Latin verse, gave prizes for speaking, as a test of the elocutionary powers of the fifth and sixth forms. Young Macready had clearly struck him as a declaimer above the average. He assigned the boy the closet scene in 'Hamlet' for the public declamation; and in answer to his remonstrance on the score of its difficulty, silenced him by saying: 'If I had not intended you to do something extraordinary, I should not have taken you out of your place.' 'Robinson, afterwards Master of the Temple, Lord Hatherton (*née* Walhouse), and the late Sir

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G. Ricketts,' Mr. Macready notes, 'were the best speakers.' But the comments made at the time on one of the cards by an old gentleman who was present at the representation on the second Tuesday in June, 1808, while they confirm the excellence of Robinson and Ricketts, place Macready quite on a level with them. They are 'excellent,' 'very well,' 'very excellent,' but his share in the entertainment is pronounced to be 'surprisingly well indeed.' In Dr. Wooll's time the school-plays were got up 'in a more expensive style' than in his predecessor's, and 'with great completeness.' Audiences from the town and neighbourhood were invited. The young actors flew at high game. Dr. Young's tragedy of 'The Revenge,' with the farce of 'Two Strings to your Bow,' made a strong bill. Zanga and Lazarillo, the leading parts, fell to Macready.

'The success was great: we were all much applauded, and I remember the remark of a Mr. Caldecot, reported to me—"I should be uneasy if I saw a son of mine play so well." I had, however, no thought of this but as an amusement; and my pride would have been wounded if a suspicion had been hinted that I could regard it in any other light. The half-year closed with speeches before an auditory consisting only of the school and the gentry of the town. My place was the last among the speakers, and I can now remember the inward elation I felt in marking, as I slowly rose up, the deep and instant hush that went through the whole assembly; I recollect the conscious pride I felt, as the creaking of my shoes came audibly to my ears,

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whilst I deliberately advanced to my place in the centre of the school. My speech was the oration of Titus Quintius, translated from Livy. It was a little triumph in its way, but the last I was doomed to obtain in dear old Rugby.'

Another reminiscence, which falls within this period, is not uninteresting. In passing through Birmingham, Macready went to the theatre, which had by this time fallen into other hands, his father having left it for Manchester. The after-piece was a serious pantomime, founded on Monk Lewis's ballad of 'Alonzo and Imogene.' The manager's wife, a lady cast in 'Nature's amplest mould,' was the fair Imogene.

'As if in studied contrast to this enormous "hill of flesh," a little mean-looking man, in a shabby green satin dress (I remember him well), appeared as the hero, Alonzo the Brave. It was so ridiculous that the only impression I carried away was that the hero and heroine were the worst in the piece. How little did I know, or could guess, that under that shabby green satin dress was hidden one of the most extraordinary theatrical geniuses that have ever illustrated the dramatic poetry of England! When, some years afterwards, public enthusiasm was excited to the highest pitch by the appearance at Drury Lane of an actor of the name of Kean, my astonishment may easily be conceived on discovering that the little insignificant Alonzo the Brave was the grandly impassioned personator of Othello, Richard, and Shylock!'

On young Macready's return home for the holidays of the winter 1808-1809, it was to find his father

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ruined. The Manchester theatre had proved a failure, and had absorbed the little property which the elder Macready had accumulated in previous years of successful management in Birmingham, Sheffield, Newcastle, and elsewhere, and out of which he had sustained the very considerable expenses of his son at Rugby. An exhibition at Oxford, a degree, and a call to the Bar, had till then been the boy's ambition. But this dream was all at once rudely dispelled. Even the last half-year's bills at Rugby were unpaid. Mr. Birch, his kind cousin there, at once relieved him of this difficulty; but his father was, in fact, bankrupt, and a return to Rugby was impossible. Mr. Macready writes, in a mysterious way, of 'a lady then staying in our house,' who had made mischief between his father and himself, and from whom he first learned the state of his father's affairs. From her came at the same time the suggestion that he should go on the stage.

'Would not my doing so relieve my father from farther expense of my education? My expectations did not go beyond this result. The extravagant views of my counsellor looked to another young Roscius *furore* (I being not yet sixteen years of age), and speculated on a rapid fortune.'

When he spoke to his father, it was to tell him his mind was made up to go on the stage. His father, who by this time was well aware of the obstinacy of his son's temper, seems to have dealt

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quite fairly with him. 'It had been the wish of his life,' he said, 'to see me at the Bar; but if it was my real wish to go upon the stage, it would be useless for him to oppose it.' To the Zanga of Rugby School the stage was probably not without allurements. In any case, he went there of his own choice, swayed, perhaps, by the thought that he was doing something noble in sacrificing to filial duty his dreams of forensic distinction. If he really had within him the qualities to make a great lawyer, all the odds are against his having given up his first ambition. Men have fought their way to the first rank at the Bar under heavier disadvantages.

At once he set about preparing himself for his future vocation, taking lessons in fencing, and getting by heart the words of the youthful characters then in vogue. Meanwhile his classics were not forgotten, and this, with the assistance which he gave his father in the business of his theatre, kept him fully employed. Of his father as an instructor for his future work he speaks slightingly. He had no originality himself. Macklin and Henderson, the heroes of his youth, John Kemble, and even Pope and Holman, were his ideals. Consequently he referred always to what he had seen, and cited the manner in which past celebrities would deliver particular passages. A worse monitor for a young man, who was not strong enough to think for himself, and find his own modes of expression, could not well be conceived. Every period has its style;

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so has every genuine artist; neither will fit another age or another individual. So we are not surprised to hear that Macready 'in after-life had the difficult task of unlearning much that was impressed upon him in his boyish days.'

Worse for a youth afflicted with a fierce and imperious temper was the circumstance that, as his father was forced to keep out of the way to avoid arrest, he had to carry on the business of his theatres for him. Managers are by necessity despots. How hurtful to one, already too self-willed, must it have been to find himself charged with all 'the omniscience of youth,' in a position where he could lay down the law on all subjects within a little kingdom of his own! The entire management devolved on him at Newcastle, where he remained for two months, 'not deriving much advantage, though some experience, from the society of some of the players, and falling desperately in love with one of the actresses—no improbable consequence of the unguarded situation of a boy of sixteen.' Availing himself of the invitation of his father's friend Fawcett, one of the best comedians of the day, he came to London in the end of 1809, to see the best actors and to learn fencing from the best masters. It was the period of the O. P. riots at Covent Garden Theatre. His father had commanded him not to see John Kemble, for fear of his becoming an imitator. The injunction was superfluous, for neither Kemble nor his sister, Mrs.

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Siddons, would be listened to. After three or four weeks of unbroken riot, the house would be tolerably quiet during the first three acts of the play, until the influx of brawlers at second price turned the theatre into a bear-garden.

During this time Macready reports that he had the satisfaction of seeing Cooke, Young, C. Kemble, Munden, Fawcett, Emery, Liston, and other distinguished performers. It was his business to see as much good acting as he could, and he did see it. Among other things, he saw the fine powers of Elliston—who had taken the Surrey Theatre, where the law allowed him to perform only burlettas—wasted on 'Macbeth,' performed as a pantomime, and on Captain Macheath, with Gay's pithy prose thrown into jingling rhyme, The first public experiment in the use of gas also attracted his notice, in the shape of a star before a house in Pall Mall, 'which relighted itself as the wind every now and then blew out some of its jets.'

This visit over, young Macready had to begin the work of life in earnest. The father was in Lancaster Castle, a prisoner for debt, until set free by the proceedings in bankruptcy, and the task of working his company and keeping it together was undertaken by his son. At Chester the struggle began against heavy odds, but the young manager contrived to make both ends meet. Newcastle, a haven of greater promise, did not disappoint him. His company was an unusually good one, with

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Conway, then young, handsome, ardent, at its head. All went so well in his hands, that the son was able to remit to his father three pounds a week 'in his melancholy duresse at Lancaster,' and to carry on his theatre with credit. Before the season closed his father obtained his release, his certificate of bankruptcy having been granted under circumstances which speak volumes for his integrity, and which his son records with an honourable pride.

These were good days for the public of the smaller towns—good also for the actors themselves, and for the drama—by keeping up a supply of intelligent, well-trained, and respectable performers.

'At that time,' Mr. Macready says, 'a theatre was considered indispensable in towns of very scanty populations. The prices of admission varied from 5s., 4s., or 3s. to boxes; 2s. 6d. or 2s. to pit; and 1s. to gallery. A sufficient number of theatres were united in what was called a circuit, to occupy a company during the whole year, so that a respectable player could calculate upon his weekly salary, without default, from year's end to year's end; and the circuits, such as those of Norwich, York, Bath, and Bristol, Exeter, Salisbury, Kent, Manchester, Birmingham, etc., with incomes rising from £70 to £300 per annum, would be a sort of home to him, so long as his conduct and industry maintained his favour with his audiences. But beyond that, the regularity of rehearsal and the attention paid to the production of plays, most of which came under the class of the "regular drama," made a sort of school for him in the repetition of his characters and the criticism of his auditors, from his proficiency in

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which he looked to Covent Garden or Drury Lane as the goal of his exertions. For instance, from Exeter came Kean; from Dublin Miss O'Neill, Conway, R. Jones, Lewis, W. Farren; from York Fawcett, C. Matthews, Emery, Harley, J. Kemble. The distance from London was then so great, and the expense and fatigue of travelling was such as to make a journey then more rare; and the larger towns, as York, Newcastle, Bath, Exeter, Norwich, were centres or capitals of provincial circles, to which the county families resorted for the winter season, or crowded to the public weeks of races and assizes, when the assembly-rooms and the theatres were the places of fashionable meeting.'*

When the elder Macready resumed the direction of his theatre, his son, though relieved from business responsibilities, continued to superintend the rehearsals; and in the getting up of the melodramas, pantomimes, etc., he 'was the instructor of the performers.' No wonder he fell into the habit of playing the schoolmaster to all about him, which made him in after-years so obnoxious to his fellows. The time for his own début had now arrived. It was made in the character of Romeo at Birmingham, where his father had again become manager.

* The writer has long held the opinion that a return to the prevalence of local permanent companies under the old system, as above explained by Mr. Macready, will alone lead to the true reform of the theatrical profession. It is idle to talk of a national theatre until we have trained actors worthy to fill it. We have too many theatres already, and too many actors, who go on the stage to make an income, not to practise an art.

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What he tells of his feelings on the occasion confirms our conviction that inclination, quite as much as duty, sent him upon the stage.

'The emotions I experienced on first crossing the stage, and coming forward in face of the lights, and the applauding audience, were almost overpowering. There was a mist before my eyes. I seemed to see nothing of the dazzling scene before me, and for some time I was like an automaton moving in certain defined limits. I went mechanically through the variations in which I had drilled myself, and it was not until the plaudits of the audience awoke me from the kind of waking dream in which I seemed to be moving, that I gained my self-possession, and really entered into the spirit of the character, and, I may say, felt the passion I was to represent. Every round of applause acted like inspiration on me: I "trod on air," became another being, or a happier self; and when the curtain fell at the conclusion of the play, and the intimate friends and performers crowded on the stage to raise up the Juliet and myself, shaking my hands with fervent congratulations, a lady asked me, "Well, sir, how do you feel now?" my boyish answer was without disguise, "I feel as if I should like to act it all over again."'

Once launched in the profession, Macready worked at it with enthusiasm. Not content with the regular work of the week, he used to lock himself into the theatre after morning service on the Sundays, and pace the stage in every direction to give himself ease, and become familiar in his deportment with exits and entrances, and with every

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variety of gesture and attitude. 'My characters,' he adds, 'were all acted over and over, and speeches recited, till, tired out, I was glad to breathe the fresh air again. This was for several years a custom with me.' The manager's son was sure to get quite his share of all the best parts, as well as of the public favour; and so early as 1811 we find him, while still only eighteen, risking his honours at Newcastle in the part of Hamlet. It was a success. All Hamlets are so, more or less. His remarks on the occasion are much to the purpose.

'The critic who had made a study of this masterpiece would predict with confidence a failure in such an experiment, but he would not have taken into account the support to the young aspirant supplied by the genius of the poet. There is an interest so deep and thrilling in the story, such power in the situations, and such a charm in the language, that with an actor possessed of energy, a tolerable elocution, and some grace of deportment, the character will sufficiently interpret itself to the majority of an audience to win for its representative, from their delight, the reward of applause really due to the poet's excellence. A total failure in Hamlet is of rare occurrence. . . . "There be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly," in the character, who could as soon explain and reconcile its seeming inconsistencies as translate a page of Sanscrit. Dr. Johnson, who so lucidly describes the mind of Polonius, has left us in his observations clear proof that he did not understand that of Hamlet; and audiences have been known to cheer innovations

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and traps for applause, which the following words of the text have shown to be at utter variance with the author's intention! My crude essay, like those of many others, was pronounced a success; but the probing inquiry and laborious study of my after-life have manifested to me how little was due to my own skill in that early personation.'

If we are to believe Mr. Macready's 'Reminiscences,' amidst all the scenic triumphs of his youth, as well as of a later day, he never thoroughly enjoyed his work. About this time he encounters Mrs. Whitlock, one of John Kemble's sisters, who, after making a comfortable independence in America, had settled with her husband in Newcastle. With something of the Kemble manner, she had none of the family genius. She was old and stout, but her love of acting was so great as to blind her to her disqualifications for the heroines of tragedy.

'She has told me,' says Macready, 'that when on the stage she felt like a being of another world! How often have I envied in others, less fortunate than myself in public favour, this passionate devotion to the stage! *To myself its drawbacks were ever present.*'

If this were really the case, it is nothing short of a miracle that Macready ever rose to the eminence he did, and his admirers, who believed the stage owed him so much, both as manager and actor, may complain that he kept up the delusion of his interest in the drama so well. But for ourselves

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we regard this as only one out of many splenetic outbursts against an art which he had seen fall, during his later years, for the most part into incapable hands, coloured by that soreness about the actor's undefined social status which grew with time into a disease with him. The drawbacks of the stage could have been little present to his mind when, in 1812, he found himself cast to play with Mrs. Siddons, as she took Newcastle on her way to London, where she was about to take her leave of the stage. The plays were 'The Gamester' and 'Douglas.' Young Norval in the latter was one of Macready's favourite parts; but he might well have been appalled, as he says he was, at the thought of playing Beverley, and for the first time, to the Mrs. Beverley of the great actress. It was one of her greatest parts. Leigh Hunt, writing in 1807, classes it with her Lady Macbeth. He cites: 'The bewildered melancholy of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep, or the widow's mute stare of perfected misery by the corpse of the gamester Beverley, two of the sublimest pieces of acting on the English stage,' as the highest illustration of Mrs. Siddons' power in the natural expression of profound emotion, which he considered to be 'the result of genius rather than of grave study.'

Mr. Macready writes, as he always spoke, of Mrs. Siddons with enthusiasm. With fear and trembling he was sent by his father to her hotel

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to rehearse his scenes with her. 'I hope, Mr. Macready,' was her good-natured salutation to him, 'you have brought some hartshorn and water with you, as I am told you are terribly frightened at me.' Some further remarks she made about his being a very young husband. Had he not been the manager's son, the remark would in all likelihood have been more pointed than it was. It could not have been pleasant for an actress of her mature and stately proportions to find herself played to by a comparative boy as a husband. The business of the morning over, he took his leave with fear and trembling to steady his nerves for the coming night. He got through his first scene with applause. In the next, his first with Mrs. Beverley, he was so overcome by fear that his memory failed him, and he stood bewildered. 'Mrs. Siddons kindly whispered the word to me (which I never could take from the prompter), and the scene proceeded.'

'What eulogy can do justice to her personations? . . . Will any verbal account of the most striking features of "the human face divine" convey a distinct portraiture of the individual? How much less can any force of description imprint on the imagination the sudden but thrilling effects of tone or look, of port or gesture, or even of the silence so often significative in the development of human passion! . . . I will not presume to catalogue the merits of this unrivalled artist, but may point out, as a guide to others, one great excellence that distinguished all her persona-

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tions. This was the unity of design, the just relation of all parts to the whole, that made us forget the actress in the character she assumed. Throughout the tragedy of "The Gamester," devotion to her husband stood out as the mainspring of her actions, the ruling passion of her being; apparent when reduced to poverty in her graceful and cheerful submission to the lot to which his vice has subjected her, in her fond excuses of his ruinous weakness, in her conciliating expostulations with his angry impatience, in her indignant repulse of Stukely's advances, when in the awful dignity of outraged virtue she imprecates the vengeance of Heaven upon his guilty head. The climax to her sorrows and sufferings was in the dungeon, when on her knees, holding her dying husband, he dropped lifeless from her arms. Her glaring eyes were fixed in stony blankness on his face; the powers of life seemed suspended in her; her sister and Lewson gently raised her, and slowly led her unresisting from the body, her gaze never for an instant averted from it; when they reached the prison door she stopped, as if awakened from a trance, uttered a shriek of agony that would have pierced the hardest heart, and, rushing from them, flung herself as if for union in death, on the prostrate form before her.

'She stood alone on her height of excellence. Her acting was perfection; and as I recall it, I do not wonder, novice as I was, at my perturbation when on the stage with her. But in the progress of the play I gradually regained more and more my self-possession, and in the last scene, as she stood by the side-wing waiting for the cue of her entrance, on my utterance of the words, "My wife and sister! well—well! there is but one pang more, and then farewell, world!" she raised her hands,

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clapping loudly, and calling out, "Bravo, sir, bravo!" in sight of part of the audience, who joined in her applause.'

This incident of the 'Bravo, sir, bravo!' comes with a chilling effect after so much to make us think that the actress was lost in her part. It might at least have been kept out of sight of the audience, to whose tearful sympathies she was the next moment to make so terrible an appeal. 'Douglas' went off without a hitch. The great lady sent for her Norval after the play, and in her grandiose manner gave him some excellent advice.

'"You are in the right way," she said, "but remember what I say,—study, study, study, and do not marry till you are thirty. I remember what it was to be obliged to study at nearly your age with a young family about me. Beware of that; keep your mind on your art, do not remit your study, and you are certain to succeed. . . . God bless you!" Her words lived with me, and often in moments of despondency have come to cheer me. Her acting was a revelation to me, which ever after had its influence on me in the study of my art. Ease, grace, untiring energy *through all the variations of human passion*, blended into that grand and massive style, had been with her the result of patient application.'

The words in italics are surely the mere hyperbole of praise. Mrs. Siddons was no doubt supreme within her range; but her range was narrow. She had dignity, grandeur, force—tenderness also in

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many of its phases. Constance, Queen Katharine, Lady Macbeth, Volumnia, and characters of the same class, were within her means, physical and mental. But there was a wide sweep of passion outside these limits which she could not reach. Of humour, the primary requisite for the treatment of Shakespeare, she was devoid; and in the portrayal of playful affection, and of what Leigh Hunt calls the 'amatory pathetic,' she wholly failed. She could, as Hunt says, 'overpower, astonish, affect; but she could not win.' What else might be expected from her 'grand and massive style'? From her acting Macready says he received a great lesson. 'Where opportunity presented itself,' he says, 'she never failed to bring out the passion of the scene and the meaning of the poet by gesture and action—more powerfully, I am convinced, than he originally conceived it.' This is the special gift of the great actor. As Voltaire said to Brizard, of the Comédie Française, 'Vous m'avez fait voir, dans le rôle de Brutus, des beautés que je n'avais pas aperçues en le composant.' Mrs. Siddons had another great merit, which Charles Young tersely expressed by saying, 'She never indulged in imagination at the expense of truth.' Macready says the same thing in a more roundabout way.

'In giving life, and, as it were, reality to the character she represented, she never resorted to trick, or introduced what actors call "business," frequently inappropriate, and resulting from the

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want of intelligence to penetrate the depth of the emotions to be portrayed.'

Of Mrs. Jordan, whom he acted with soon afterwards at Leicester, Mr. Macready gives us some pleasant glimpses. The gayest, merriest, most spontaneous of actresses, she left no point unstudied, spared no pains to insure her effects.

'At rehearsal,' he says, 'I remarked, as I watched this charming actress intently through her first scene, how minute and how particular her directions were; nor would she be satisfied, till by repetition she had seen the business executed exactly to her wish. The moving picture, the very life of the scene, was perfect in her mind, and she transferred it in all its earnestness to every movement on the stage. With a spirit of fun that would have outlaughed Puck himself, there was a discrimination, an identity with her character, an artistic arrangement of the scene that made all appear spontaneous and accidental, though elaborated with the greatest care. Her voice was one of the most melodious I ever heard; . . . and who that once heard that laugh of hers could ever forget it? . . . so rich, so apparently irrepressible, so deliciously self-enjoying, as to be at all times irresistible.'

What this laugh was, and the secret of its charm, Leigh Hunt has told us in even happier language:

'Her laughter is the happiest and most natural on the stage. . . . It intermingles itself with her words, as fresh ideas afford her fresh merriment; she does not so much indulge as she seems unable to help it; it increases, it lessens with her fancy, and when you expect it no longer, according to the

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usual habit of the stage, it sparkles forth at little intervals, as recollection revives it, like flame from half-smothered embers. This is the laughter of the feelings; and it is this predominance of the heart in all she says and does that renders her the most delightful actress in the Donna Violante of the "Wonder," and the Clara of "Matrimony," and in twenty other characters which ought to be more lady-like than she can make them, and which acquire a better gentility with others.'

Oh for the return of such acting and such criticism! Macready's ambition carried him, even in these salad days, into 'Richard III.,' the Antony of 'Antony and Cleopatra,' for neither of which he owns he was at all fitted. He even undertook the revival of 'Richard II.,' and produced it at Leicester, with himself as Richard. Since Shakespeare's days it had not been seen upon the stage. It was a complete success, and proved the attraction of the season. In later years it was one of his favourite parts; Edmund Kean also numbered it on his list; but the play has never taken hold of the stage. Why this is so, Mr. Macready states, with the acuteness which, as a rule, distinguishes his criticisms on plays and books:

'It has often excited the wonder of Shakespearian critics, that it should have lain so long neglected, and still should enjoy so little popularity. The passion of its language and the beauty of its poetry (considered apart from effect in representation) have dazzled its readers, and blinded them to the absence of any marked idiosyncrasy in the persons

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of the drama, and to the want of strong purpose in any of them. Not one does anything to cause a result. All seem floated along on the tides of circumstance. Nothing has its source in premeditation. Richard's acts are those of idle, almost childish, levity, wanton caprice, or unreflecting injustice. He is alternately confidently boastful and pusillanimously despondent. His extravagant persuasions of kingly inviolability, and of heavenly interposition in his behalf, meet with no response in the sympathies of an audience. His grief is that of a spoiled, passionate boy.'

After illustrating his proposition in detail, he proceeds:

'In all the greater plays of Shakespeare, purpose and will, the general foundations of character, are the engines which set action at work. In "King Richard II." we look for these in vain. Macbeth, Othello, Iago, Hamlet, Richard III., etc., both think and do; but Richard II., Bolingbroke, York, and the rest, though they talk so well, do little else than talk: nor can all the charm of composition redeem, in a dramatic point of view, the weakness resulting from this accident in a play's construction. In none of his personations did the late Edmund Kean display more masterly elocution than in the third act of "Richard II."; but the admiration he excited could not maintain a place for the work in the list of acting plays among the favourite dramas of Shakespeare.'

In 1813, the elder Macready having become the tenant of the Glasgow and Dumfries theatres, his son made acquaintance with a fresh public, and laid the foundation of his popularity in the West of

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Scotland. He remembered with peculiar satisfaction the knot of play-goers who clustered in corners of the Glasgow pit, and by their murmurs of approval encouraged the young actor with the belief that they were giving their thoughts to what was going on before them. The theatre was the largest out of the Metropolis; and the necessity which he felt himself under, of more careful study and practice, to satisfy the demands of an audience critical as well as enthusiastic, had an excellent effect in advancing his mastery of his art. Here he had to measure his strength against young Betty, of whose energy, dignity, and pathos he speaks warmly—admitting, at the same time, that Betty did not study improvement in his art, and consequently 'deteriorated by becoming used up in the frequent repetition of the same parts.'

Hitherto Macready had lived with his father. The temper of neither was good. The infirmity of his own the son declares 'to have been the source of most of the misery he had known in life.' But when passion got the better of his father, 'there was no curb to the violence of his language.' Each had strong opinions; and as they did not always run in the same groove, the son very often provoked the displeasure of the father. 'If two men,' as Dogberry says, 'ride upon a horse, one must ride behind'; and we can well believe that the younger Macready was not likely to accept the hindmost place. He was now, too, approaching

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manhood; and after an angry parley, father and son parted, on the understanding that the latter should thenceforth live apart, and receive a salary of £3 a week. A truce was patched up for a time after the return of the company to their head-quarters at Newcastle; but, with such jarring elements, it could be of only brief duration. Meanwhile the son did his best to keep up the reputation of his father's theatres, taking on himself a heavy share of the work, writing pieces from Scott's 'Marmion' and 'Rokeby,' and rearranging others to meet the exigencies of the hour. In the midst of his labours, to spur his ambitious hopes, the tidings reached him of the triumph at Drury Lane, as Shylock, of the insignificant little Alonzo of the Birmingham Theatre. His Othello followed, justly recognised, Macready says—and for once he does not qualify his praise—'as a masterpiece of tragic power and skill.' Charles Kemble and his wife visit Newcastle in 'engagements not very lucrative.' His Mirabel, in Farquhar's 'Inconstant,' is spoken of—how truly some will yet remember—as 'a most finished piece of acting.' His Richmond is 'chivalrous and spirited,' his Cassio 'incomparable.' The general remark that 'he was a first-rate actor in second-rate parts' is a true one. But who may now hope to see the first-rate parts filled on the same scale of excellence? Emery and Young also pass across the theatrical horizon of Newcastle. The acting of the former

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in the 'Yorkshire Farmer' was so lifelike, and his natural manner so irresistible, that Macready found it impossible, in playing with him, to suppress upon the stage the laughter he provoked. The plays in which he won his fame have passed away; but in one of them, Tyke, in the 'School of Reform,' the tradition of his excellence is still strong. In it, Macready says, 'he rose to the display of terrific power.' Of Charles Young, Macready cannot bring himself to speak with the same heartiness. He has nothing better to say of one of the most refined and, at the same time, impressive of actors than that he was,

'of course, greatly and deservedly applauded. His grand declamatory style wound up the speeches of Zanga and Mortimer with telling effect. His Richard was not good; and his performance of Hamlet (a character that so few are found to agree upon) had, as usual, its very numerous admirers.'

But the truth is, and it is a melancholy one, that wherever professional rivalry intervened, Macready's judgment was warped. It comes out most painfully in an entry in his diary, so late as July 5, 1856. The tidings of Young's death, at the age of seventy-nine, have just reached him, and he writes:

'My struggle in professional life was against him, and for several years we were in rivalry together; disliking, of course, but still respecting one another. . . . No two men could have differed more in the character of their minds, in their tastes, pursuits,

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and dispositions; but his prudence, his consistency in his own peculiar views, and the uniform respectability of his conduct, engaged and held fast my esteem for him, from the time that the excitable feelings of immediate rivalry had passed away.'

A pitiable confession for himself; an unwarrantable assumption that it was, 'of course,' equally true of Young. Young's sweet and generous nature was ever ready to see and to delight in the merits of a brother actor. The finest things that have been said of Mrs. Siddons were said by him. 'Of Kean,' his son tells us, in his delightful and only too brief 'Memoir,' 'he was a great admirer, although by no means blind to his faults.' It was of Kean he made the remark—and experience unhappily confirms its general application—that the passages on which he (Kean) had bestowed the most pains, and which were chastely and beautifully delivered, he never got a hand for; while his delivery of those which, to use his own phrase, caused 'the house to rise at him,' were in bad taste and meretricious. This qualified admiration, his son says, was not due to jealousy, adding:

'I really do not think he was open to that suspicion, for I have never known him grudge his praise to Charles Kemble, or William Macready, who came more frequently into competition with him.'

Young and Macready were, indeed, as unlike in the characters of their minds and dispositions as

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they were in their style as actors. There was an unselfish nobleness in Young, a delight in all that was good in others, which gave a graciousness and charm to the man and to the actor quite peculiar to himself. To young Macready he gave, in these early days, a piece of advice, of which the justice will be felt by those who remember Macready's prevailing fault even in his maturer years: 'Young gentleman, you expend a degree of power unnecessarily; half the energy and fire that you employ would be more than sufficient. You will only waste your strength if you do not bear this in mind.'

Macready had up to this time worked loyally for his father, and repaid all, and more than all, that had been expended upon that education at Rugby, which was to prove of priceless value to his future career. Fresh disputes between them arose. Neither would give way, and Macready left home upon an engagement for Bath. The theatre there was at that time regarded as a sort of antechamber to the great patent theatres of London, 'and the judgment of a Bath audience a pretty sure presage of the decision of the Metropolis.' The young actor stood the scrutiny of this critical public. He was hailed with 'compliments, invitations, troops of friends, and all the flattering evidences of unanimous success'; but

'One bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom threw.'

A Zoilus of the press hit him in his tenderest

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point by saying of his Beverley, that it would have been altogether excellent, if not perfect, 'but for the unaccommodating disposition of Nature in the formation of his face.' The rumour of his success soon spread. Mr. Harris, of Covent Garden, opened negotiations with him; and an engagement for seven weeks in Dublin, at £50 a week, was the best assurance that he had now fairly got his foot on the first round of the ladder. The negotiations for Covent Garden having taken him to London, where Kean and Miss O'Neill were crowding the two great houses, the impressions they produced on him are well described:

'Places were taken one night at Drury Lane for "Richard III.," and for another Fawcett procured seats for us in the orchestra of Covent Garden, to see the Juliet of Miss O'Neill to the best advantage. Kean was engaged to sup with my father at the York Hotel after the performance of "Richard," to which I went with no ordinary feelings of curiosity. Cooke's representation of the part I had been present at several times, and it lived in my memory in all its sturdy vigour. . . . There was a solidity of deportment and manner, and at the same time a sort of unctuous enjoyment of his successful craft, in the soliloquizing stage villainy of Cooke, which gave powerful and rich effect to the sneers and overbearing retorts of Cibber's hero, and certain points (as the peculiar mode of delivering a passage is technically phrased), traditional from Garrick, were made with consummate skill, significance, and power.

'Kean's conception was decidedly more Shake-

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spearian. He hurried you along in his resolute course with a spirit that brooked no delay. In inflexibility of will and sudden grasp of expedients he suggested the idea of a feudal Napoleon. His personation was throughout consistent, and he was only inferior to Cooke where he attempted points upon the same ground as his distinguished predecessor.

'My father and self were betimes in our box. Pope was the lachrymose and rather tedious performer of Henry VI. But when the scene changed, and a little keenly visaged man rapidly bustled across the stage, I felt there was meaning in the alertness of his manner and the quickness of his step. As the play proceeded I became more and more satisfied that there was a mind of no common order. In his angry complaining of Nature's injustice to his bodily imperfections, as he uttered the line, "To shrink my arm up like a withered shrub," he remained looking on the limb for some moments with a sort of bitter discontent, and then struck it back in angry disgust. My father, who sat behind me, touched me, and whispered, "It's very poor!" "Oh, no!" I replied, "it is no common thing," for I found myself stretching over the box to observe him. The scene with Lady Anne was entered on with evident confidence, and was well sustained, in the affected earnestness of petulance, to its successful close. In tempting Buckingham to the murder of the children, he did not impress me as Cooke was wont to do, in whom the sense of the crime was apparent in the gloomy hesitation with which he gave reluctant utterance to the deed of blood. Kean's manner was consistent with his conception, proposing their death as a political necessity, and sharply requiring it as a business to be done. The two actors were equally effective in

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their respective views of the unscrupulous tyrant; but leaving to Cooke the more prosaic version of Cibber, it would have been desirable to have seen the energy and restless activity of Kean giving life to racy language and scenes of direct and varied agency in the genuine tragedy with which his whole manner and appearance were so much more in harmony. In his studied mode of delivering the passages, "Well! as you guess?" and "Off with his head! So much for Buckingham!" he could not approach the searching, sarcastic incredulity, or the rich vindictive chuckle of Cooke; but in the bearing of the man throughout, as the intriguer, the tyrant, and the warrior, he seemed never to relax the ardour of his pursuit, presenting the life of the usurper as one unbroken whole, and closing it with a death picturesquely and poetically grand. Many of the Kemble school resisted conviction in his merits, but the fact that he made me feel was an argument to enrol me with the majority on the indisputable genius he displayed.

'We retired to the hotel as soon as the curtain fell, and were soon joined by Kean, accompanied, or rather attended, by Pope. I need not say with what intense scrutiny I regarded him as we shook hands on our mutual introduction. The mild and modest expression of his Italian features, and his unassuming manner, which I might perhaps justly describe as partaking in some degree of shyness, took me by surprise, and I remarked with special interest the indifference with which he endured the fulsome flatteries of Pope. He was very sparing of words during, and for some time after, supper; but about one o'clock, when the glass had circulated pretty freely, he became animated, fluent, and communicative. His anecdotes were related with a lively sense of the ridiculous; in the melodies he

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sang there was a touching grace, and his powers of mimicry were most humorously or happily exerted in an admirable imitation of Braham; and in a story of Incledon acting Steady the Quaker at Rochester, without any rehearsal—where, in singing the favourite air, "When the lads of the village so merrily, ah!" he heard himself, to his dismay and consternation, accompanied by a single bassoon,—the music of his voice, his perplexity at each recurring sound of the bassoon, his undertone maledictions on the self-satisfied musician, the peculiarity of his habits, all were hit off with a humour and an exactness that equalled the best display Mathews ever made, and almost convulsed us with laughter. It was a memorable evening, the first and last I ever spent in private with this extraordinary man.'

This animated sketch is followed by an account of Miss O'Neill's Juliet, not so discriminating, but, naturally, more glowing. The writer was young, susceptible, and he would have been more or less than mortal, if admiration for the beauty of the woman had not heightened the estimate of the actress.

Two years were yet to elapse before Macready was to face the ordeal of a London audience. He stood out for terms which the managers there were not prepared to yield. The Drury Lane Committee was appealed to by his friends, and one of them having urged with Lord Byron (who was upon it), in addition to the young aspirant's professional merits and successes, the further plea that Mr. Macready was 'a very moral man,' drew from

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his lordship the very practical reply: 'Ah! then I suppose he asks £5 a week more for his morality.' The interval was spent in most useful practice in the chief provincial theatres; but at length, his cautious scruples having been overcome, and good terms secured, Mr. Macready appeared at Covent Garden as Orestes, in 'The Distressed Mother,' on September 16, 1816. He was received with the applause always liberally bestowed on every new performer, and this Kean, who was conspicuous in a private box, helped to swell. Better still, the critics of the press admitted his claims to distinction; Hazlitt, one of the best of them, described him 'as by far the best tragic actor that has come out in our remembrance, with the exception of Kean.' Othello, his next part of importance, confirmed the favourable estimate. The *Times* gave him the highest praise in saying of it: 'The actor's judgment is shown in his practice of employing all his force in those passages of noiseless but intense feeling, and exhibiting it in all its sublime depths, if not by a sudden look or startling gesture, yet by a condensation of vigorous utterance and masculine expression, from which few will be disposed to appeal.' In Iago, which in after-years was one of his finest studies, he failed by his own admission. Hazlitt's remark that 'Young in Othello was like a great humming-top, and Macready in Iago like a mischievous boy whipping him,' he owns was quite as compli-

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mentary as his own share of the performance deserved.

Miss O'Neill, John Kemble, Young, and Charles Kemble, were all at Covent Garden, and in the height of their popularity, and Macready found that he must be content to drop into a comparatively subordinate place. Kean, at Drury Lane, divided with them the public enthusiasm; and he had consequently abundant leisure to profit by the study of the performances of his great compeers. By this we are gainers, in a few excellent pages of description, which bring their distinctive qualities vividly before us, and which are of especial value from the pen of one so well qualified to judge. But this enforced banishment to the second rank was wormwood to Macready, whose way it was to drop into despondency whenever things did not go exactly as he wished. It actually led him to cast about in his thoughts 'in quest of some other mode of life less subject to those alternations of hope and dejection, which so frequently and so painfully acted on my temper.' While in this mood he was summoned to the reading of a tragedy by a new author. This was Richard Lalor Sheil, with whose dramatic successes Macready was destined to become henceforth in a great measure identified. The play was 'The Apostate.' There were parts in it for Young, C. Kemble, and Miss O'Neill; that of Pescara was assigned to Macready. He took it 'mournfully and despon-

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dently.' Charles Kemble, a better judge of what was to be done with it, cheered him by saying, 'Why, William, it is no doubt a disagreeable part, but there is passion in it.' This was true; and the part, odious as it was, gave Mr. Macready his first real hold on the London public. Ludwig Tieck, who saw him in it, speaks of it in his 'Dramaturgische Blätter' as a performance 'so vehement, truthful, and powerful,' that, for the first time in England, he felt himself recalled to the best days of German acting. 'If the young man,' he adds, 'continues in this style, he will go far.' The impression produced on Tieck must have been a strong one, for he told Goethe's biographer, Mr. Lewes, many years afterwards, that he liked Macready better than either Kemble or Kean. It was, in some respects, unlucky for Macready that his very success in portraying the villainous passions of Pescara led to his having a series of others of a kindred character assigned to him. But if this had its bad side, it also had its good; for by the intensity and picturesqueness which he threw into these and other characters of a somewhat melodramatic cast, he made more progress in public favour than he would probably have done in the great characters of Shakespeare, where, rightly or wrongly, he would have suffered by comparison with established favourites.

In 1817 John Kemble gave his last performances. Asthma and a general decline of health had left

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but a wreck—a splendid one, it is true—of his former self. Of all his parts, Macready gives the preference to King John, Wolsey, The Stranger, Brutus, 'and his peerless Coriolanus.' He was present at his last performance of Macbeth, and on this occasion Mrs. Siddons was unwise enough to appear as Lady Macbeth. The contrast with her former self was pitiable. 'It was not,' he says, 'a performance, but a mere repetition of the poet's text—no flash, no sign of her all-subduing genius!' Her brother languished through the greater part of a play which demands all the vigour of a powerful physique.

'Through the whole first four acts the play moved heavily on; Kemble correct, tame, and ineffective; but in the fifth, when the news was brought, "The Queen, my Lord, is dead!" he seemed struck to the heart; gradually collecting himself, he sighed out, "She should have died hereafter!"—then, as if with the inspiration of despair, he hurried out, distinctly and pathetically the lines:

'"To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow," etc.

rising to a climax of desperation that brought down the enthusiastic cheers of the closely-packed theatre. All at once he seemed carried away by the genius of the scene. At the tidings of "the wood of Birnam moving," he staggered, as if the shock had struck the very seat of life, and in the bewilderment of fear and rage could just ejaculate the words, "Liar and slave!" then lashing himself into a state of frantic rage, ended the scene in perfect triumph. His shrinking from Macduff when the charm on

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which his life hung was broken by the declaration that his antagonist was "not of woman born," was a masterly stroke of art; his subsequent defiance was most heroic; and at his death Charles Kemble received him in his arms, and laid him gently on the ground, his physical powers being unequal to further effort.'

Mr. Macready nowhere appears to more advantage in his reminiscences than in passages like this. When no personal feeling interfered, his criticisms as a rule are excellent. They rested, both where books and acting were concerned, on wide observation and careful study. But although his active life, as he himself says, had been devoted chiefly to the study of poetry and playing, he always speaks with the modesty of true knowledge of his own powers as a critic. The standards by which he judged were high, for he well knew that on the stage, as in books, 'le moyen le plus sûr,' as Clairon says, 'd'anéantir le mérite, est de protéger la médiocrité.' Knowing as he did, that of all arts his own was the most complex, and rested on facts of Nature which few are capable even of observing, he was entitled to speak with some contempt of the opinion prevalent in England, 'that no particular study is requisite to make a critic or connoisseur of acting.' That acting in France and Germany still keeps a high level is in some measure due to the fact that it has its critics there who know when and why to praise or to condemn.

The production of 'Rob Roy,' on March 12,

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1818, enabled Mr. Macready to make another decided upward step in public favour. In this character he broke the spell which had begun to hang round him, 'as the undisputed representative of the disagreeable,' and which had seemed to weigh him down. The mingled humour, pathos, and passion of the character exactly fitted him. Its rugged heroism, dashed with the poetical element, stood well out in his somewhat abrupt and impulsive mode of treatment. Barry Cornwall, the fast friend of his after-life, wrote a sonnet about it, praising 'the buoyant air,' the 'passionate tone,' that breathed about it and lit up the actor's eye 'with fire and freedom.' This success revived Macready's hopes, and encouraged him to 'bide his time.' Amurath, in another of Sheil's now forgotten plays, 'Bellamira, or the Fall of Tunis,' enabled him soon after to score a fresh success. 'Macready,' wrote the *Times* 'quite surpassed himself in the cool, remorseless villain, regarding his victim with the smile of a demon.'

The next season saw the production of the most successful of Sheil's plays, 'Evadne, or the Statue,' in which some fine situations, splendidly treated by Miss O'Neill, Young, Charles Kemble, and Macready, concealed that inherent weakness of both plot and dialogue which have consigned it, with its fellows, to unregrettable oblivion. Here, as usual, Ludovico, Macready's part, was the villain of the piece. The next new piece was Mathurin's 'Fredolfo,'

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in which there were no less than three villains. The worst of the three, Wallenberg, 'a very voluptuary in villainy, whom it was not possible the taste of any audience could tolerate,' fell of course to Macready. The play struggled through to the fifth act. Here Wallenberg, under circumstances of more than Mathurinian atrocity, had to kill the hero, 'upon which the pit got up with a perfect yell of indignation, such as, I fancy, was never before heard in a theatre.' The curtain fell for the first and last time upon the catastrophe. Such parts as Posthumus in 'Cymbeline,' or Cassius in 'Julius Cæsar,' however, came in to soothe the disappointed ambition of the young actor. But it was not till the winter of 1819 that his chance came of being recognised as a Shakespearian actor. To his consternation, he found himself one day announced for Gloster, in 'Richard III.' It was no ordinary trial, with the fresh fame of Kean in the part staring him in the face. However, he was committed to the public, and must screw up 'each corporal agent to the terrible feat':

'All that history could give me I had already ferreted out; and for my portrait of the character —the self-reliant, wily, quick-sighted, decisive, inflexible Plantagenet—I went direct to the true source of inspiration, the *great* original, endeavouring to carry its spirit through the sententious and stagy lines of Cibber, not searching for particular "points" to make, but rendering the hypocrisy of the man deceptive and persuasive in its earnestness.

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and presenting him in the execution of his will as acting with lightning-like rapidity.'

His triumph was complete. It overcame even those who had hitherto thought lightly of his powers. Among these, apparently, was Leigh Hunt. 'We thought him a man of feeling,' he wrote in the next *Examiner*, 'but little able to give a natural expression to it, and so taking the usual refuge in declamation. . . . We expected to find vagueness and generality, and we found truth of detail. We expected to find declamation, and we found thoughts giving a soul to words.'

Covent Garden Theatre had been for some time in so languishing a state that the company were playing on reduced salaries. Macready's success turned the tide; the exchequer was replenished, and by common consent he now felt himself the leading actor of the theatre. The ball once started kept rolling. In Coriolanus he won his next honours; and to confirm him in his place, Knowles's 'Virginius,' with its fresh and forcible if somewhat flashy style, gave him a character which especially fitted him in all his strongest points. 'Austere, tender, familiar, elevated, mingling at once terror and pathos,' was the just description given of it by a critic of the day. It spoke home to people's hearts, and in Macready's treatment no play of modern times has drawn more tears, or more truly touched the springs of pity and terror.

From this time Macready's position was assured;

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and allowing for the vicissitudes of life, and of his profession, he became a prosperous, and, but for his own desponding and querulous disposition, might have been a happy, man. He rose at once in market value. Engagements poured in upon him, and he began to lay the foundation of the comfortable independence which he ultimately secured. Mrs. Siddons' prudent counsel not to marry before thirty had never been forgotten; not that Cupid had not in the meantime tapped him more than once upon the shoulder. And when the time came, when forbearance seemed to be no longer necessary, his choice of a wife was characteristic of his passion for supremacy. She was a child of nine when he first came across her in 1815, playing a child's part in one of his scenes. She was imperfect in her words, and he tells us, that he 'scolded her on coming off the stage for her neglect, which he was afterwards sorry for, as it cost her many tears.' Five or six years afterwards they met on the stage at Aberdeen, where she had to play his daughter in 'Virginius.' Her beauty and intelligence attracted him, and his interest was deepened by finding that she was the support of her family. This interest led to a correspondence, in which the tutor developed into the lover. He would have married her in 1820, and indeed went to Worthing, where she was, for the purpose. His sister went with him to be introduced to his future bride.

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What ensued had much better, we think, have been left untold. The ladies conceived an instant and mutual aversion for each other. The marriage was put off, and the young lady was sent to a boarding school, apparently to get educated to Miss Macready's satisfaction. She aided the paternally-minded lover 'in his duties of tutorage to his lovely and docile Griselda;' and eighteen months afterwards, the sister having in the meantime declared herself satisfied, these patient lovers were married at St. Pancras Church.

Macready was a Liberal and something more in politics, as so many men are who, like him, resent not having been born of gentle blood. In his diary, on December 30 1835, *àpropos* of the President's speech, he writes: 'I read it through, and think it is to be lamented that European countries cannot learn the lesson of self-government from our wiser and happier brothers of the West.' The remark does not say much for his political sagacity; and a rough experience of American mobs, to be afterwards mentioned, cured him very effectually of his regret, that we had gone on governing ourselves in our own way. In 1826, and again in 1843-1844, when he visited the States, he was received with enthusiasm, and in a literal sense had secured 'golden opinions from all sorts of people.' The best men in the country had held out the hand of friendship to him. He had even thought for a time of settling

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there and forgetting England, with its mortifications and its social distinctions, which were so abhorrent to his spirit.

Visits to Italy in 1822, and again in 1827, enabled Macready to gratify his love for art, and to enrich his mind with remembrances, which his previous studies qualified him to turn to excellent account. An engagement in Paris, in 1828, established his reputation with the most critical of audiences. Virginius, William Tell, Othello, and Hamlet, with the wide range of character, passion, and pathos which they involved, came as a sort of revelation to audiences accustomed to tragedies of a more limited scope, and transported them to an enthusiasm which made them rank the young Englishman with Le Kain and Talma. When he returned to play in Paris in 1844, this enthusiasm, we remember, had very sensibly cooled. Either the actor's power had diminished or the taste for his methods had changed. His great ability and accomplishment continued to be recognised. But it was 'talent' as distinct from 'genius,' of which such critics as Janin, Theophile Gautier, Edouard Thierry, and Dumas the Elder spoke.

The Diaries continue the story of Macready's career from 1826, and tell, through many years, a sad tale of bad temper, of angry jealousies, of somewhat unmanly querulousness. The condition of the London stages was declining from bad to worse; and, if we may judge from his annual

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balance-sheets, which no tradesman could have kept with closer care, his popularity was on the wane. An income of £3,285 5s. 0d. in 1827 has dropped in 1832 to £1,680 1s. 9d. Then come such entries as this (October 2, 1832): 'Newspapers, middling, middling. They persecute me.' Or this (November 10, 1832):

'Lost much time and thought in useless, vain, bad imaginations, referring to people indifferent to me, not turning my eyes to the good I possess, but lashing myself into a state of irritation which, if it were wise or just to despise anything in humanity, should awaken my contempt. Let me be wiser, O God!'

He finds the key to his own disquietudes in Johnson's remark on Dryden: 'He is always angry at some past or afraid of some future censure.' He reproaches himself with exhibiting 'odiosam et inutilem morositatem'; and to what lengths this must have carried him we see from his noting (February 21, 1833), as something apparently exceptional, '*Rehearsed with civility.*' A poor little boy, playing Albert to his William Tell, 'disconcerts and *enrages*' him. He plays Iago at Manchester (March 16, 1833), 'pretty well, but was certainly disconcerted, *if not annoyed*, by the share of applause bestowed on Mr. Cooper as Othello,' whom we remember as one of the most commonplace of actors. He had no faith in his own reputation, but lived in ceaseless apprehension 'of the danger

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it runs from the appearance of every new aspirant' (October 21, 1885). A few days before he writes: 'If I had not ties which bind me down to this profession (and I could curse the hour it was suggested to me), I would eat a crust, or eat nothing rather than play in it.' Well might he say of himself, 'Vanity and a diseased imagination are the sources of my errors and my follies,' although it was not quite so clear that they were what, in the same sentence, he calls 'the evil result of a neglected youth.' It is so pleasant to throw the blame for our 'cunning bosom sins' anywhere but upon our own pride and passionate will. What an amount of self-torture and humiliation does a nature of this kind prepare for itself! It not only makes troubles, but magnifies those to which all men are born. Intolerant, it begets intolerance, and robs itself of the kindly sympathy that makes half the pleasure of life. On March 30, 1885, he notes:

'I begin to despair of obtaining that mastery over myself which I owe to myself, to my children, and to society. It is no excuse nor plea that I suffer so keenly as I do from regret and shame at my own intemperance. I feel the folly, the madness, the provoking extravagance of my behaviour, treating men like slaves, and assuming a power over them which is most unjustifiable and most dangerous; and yet contrition and stinging reflection seem to have no power in the punishment they inflict of producing amendment.'

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It was more than mere jest Bulwer's saying of him, as he sat at a public dinner, that he looked like 'a baffled tyrant.'

This fretful state of mind was wrought to frenzy in the beginning of 1836, by the studied slights put upon him by his Drury Lane manager, Mr. Bunn, a man whom he might be forgiven for regarding with contempt. Macready held, however, a lucrative permanent engagement at the theatre, to which he was determined to hold fast. Bunn, on the other hand, wanted to get rid of him, for the twofold reason that his attraction had fallen off, and that Malibran had been secured for the theatre, and made the manager independent of the legitimate drama. The parties were at covert warfare, each trying to outflank the other. It was Bunn's tactics to disgust Macready by professional slights, putting him up for inferior parts, for important ones at too short notice, and the like. At last the climax of indignity was inflicted by announcing Macready for 'the three first acts of "Richard III."' The night came. He went through the part 'in a sort of desperate way.' As he left the stage, he had to pass the manager's room; opening the door, he rushed in upon the startled *impresario*, who was seated at his writing-table, and, launching a highly appropriate but by no means complimentary epithet at him, with the pent-up force of a wrath that had been nursed for months, 'he struck him a back-handed slap across the face.' A vehement scuffle

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ensued, in which Bunn, a much smaller and feebler man, had necessarily the worst of it. Macready was too truly a gentleman not to feel that, in this scene, he had, to use his own words, committed a 'most indiscreet, most imprudent, most blamable action.' His shame and contrition, as expressed in his diary, are overwhelming. 'The fair fame of a life has been sullied by a moment's want of self-command. I can never, never during my life, forgive myself,' are among their mildest expressions.

Happily for him, his character stood as high with the world as that of his adversary was low. There were few to regret that Mr. Bunn had got a thrashing; many who were sure that, if not for his offences to Macready, at least for other delinquencies, he had richly deserved one. All the leading actors felt that Macready had been cruelly provoked, and they rallied loyally round him. Bunn brought his 'action of battery,' and his injuries were ultimately assessed at £150. But in the meantime Mr. Macready had been secured at Covent Garden, receiving £200 for an engagement for ten nights; and on his appearance there had been greeted with tumultuous applause. At the close of the play, 'Macbeth,' he was called for, and spoke. Had anything been wanted to seal his peace and popularity with the public, it was given in his frank avowal, after a slight reference to the provocations, personal and professional, which he had received, that he had been 'betrayed, in a

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moment of unguarded passion, into an intemperate and imprudent act, for which I feel, and shall never cease to feel, the deepest and most poignant self-reproach and regret.'

Everything now conspired in Mr. Macready's favour. The flagging attention of the public had been reawakened. There was a company at Covent Garden well qualified to do justice to his plays. Charles Kemble was there; and all the town was crowding to see Helen Faucit, then a mere girl, 'unschooled, unpractised,' who a few months before had captivated it by a freshness, an enthusiasm, a truthfulness and grace, to which it had long been unaccustomed.* The interest in Shakespeare and the higher drama had revived, and it was kept alive during this and the following season by a succession of excellent representations of the most favourite plays. All this tended to the advancement of Mr. Macready's reputation. His scholarly attainments and general culture were also well known, so that when, at the end of 1837, he undertook the management of Covent Garden Theatre.

* 'It has been my good fortune to know Helen Faucit even before she witched the world, in her early girlhood, in "The Lady of Lyons," in "The Hunchback," and in those Shakespearian characters in which from then till now she has had no rival. We remember Mr. Macready's astonishment that, "almost a child, she never had any country practice"; and we knew that, while leading in the plays we have named, she was so much under age that she could not sign her engagements' (from a paper by Mrs. S. C. Hall, 1875).

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with the avowed purpose of making it a home for Shakespeare and the best dramatic art, the ablest members of the company and of the profession combined to lend him their hearty support, accepting greatly reduced salaries, and more than one agreeing to appear in secondary parts which their recognised position in the profession would justify them in declining.

To undertake the conduct of such a theatre, loaded as it was with a too heavy rent, and damaged by many years of wretched management, was a venture of considerable risk. But Mr. Macready had every inducement to make it, quite apart from any wish he might have to raise the standard of his art. Drury Lane was closed to him, for it was still in Mr. Bunn's hands. Only there and at Covent Garden could the legitimate drama in those days be played, and, if that theatre were shut up, he must have been thrown on the provincial theatres, where, for some time, his attraction had been waning. But by taking it, he at once secured the sympathies of the public, and was able to bring his powers, both as actor and manager, before them with far more effect than he could have hoped to do in any other way. A bolder spirit would have staked much on such a prospect without a shadow of misgiving. Mr. Macready, as his diaries show, was neither patient enough nor sanguine enough to fight the first uphill fight of all such ventures with steady

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courage. He was too fearful of loss, too easily daunted by temporary unsuccess. The least failure disconcerts him, and he broods and trembles over an adverse balance of a few hundreds, which would scarcely cost a thought to a man really fitted for the administration of a great theatre. So he goes on torturing himself with apprehensions during his first season of management, which added a needless weight to the already too heavy burdens of one who had to do the double duty of both manager and actor.

He had, it is true, everything to cheer him in his arduous task. The Queen was a constant visitor at the theatre; the public were warm in their admiration; and such men as Bulwer, Knowles, Browning, and Talfourd enabled him to sustain an interest in his management by a constant succession of new pieces. Stanfield painted for his first pantomime an exquisite moving diorama of many of the most picturesque scenes in Europe, and returned his cheque for £300, refusing to accept more than £150, which Mr. Macready records as 'one of the few noble instances of disinterested friendly conduct he had met with in his life!' The 'Lady of Lyons,' produced on February 15, 1838, replenished his then failing exchequer; neither would its author hear of being paid for it. He, too, returns the manager's cheque for £210, in a letter 'which is a recompense for much ill-requited labour and unpitied suffering.' This play, like many

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other successful plays, did not attract at first. Macready, quickly dispirited, on the eighth or ninth night talked of withdrawing it. The curtain had just fallen on the exciting scene of the fourth act. 'Could you see,' said Mr. Bartley, who was playing Damas, 'what I see, as I stand at the back of the stage, the interest and the emotion of the people, you would not think of such a thing. It is sure to be a great success.' Mr. Macready took his advice, and the prediction was fully verified. 'King Lear,' with Shakespeare's text restored, was produced early in the season with great effect, Bulwer ministering incense of the most pungent kind by telling Mr. Macready that his performance of the old King was 'gigantic.' 'Coriolanus,' admirably acted and put upon the stage, soon followed. The house on the first night was bad, and Macready was in despair: 'I give up all hope,' are his words. Among the old stock pieces, 'The Two Foscari,' and Talfourd's feeble 'Athenian Captive' came as novelties; and, towards the end of the season, Knowles's charming comedy of 'Women's Wit, or Love's Disguises,' charmingly acted, was also brought out.

In direct pounds, shillings, and pence, Mr. Macready was a loser by the season. So, at least, we understand him to put its results, where he says (August 3, 1838): 'I find I managed to lose, as I first thought, judging from actual decrease of capital, and absence of profit by my labour, £2,500,

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or, measuring my receipt by the previous year, £1,850.' But against this was to be set the positive increase of reputation and prestige, which secured him engagements, both in London and elsewhere, that, in the long-run, far more than compensated this temporary loss. Moreover, the business of theatrical management, like every business, takes time to make, and practical men do not regard a deficit in the outset as an actual loss. Mr. Macready, no doubt, in his less desponding moods, took the same view, and having made a more favourable arrangement with his landlords, he took Covent Garden for another season, and opened a fresh campaign, with renewed vigour, on September 24, 1838.

Aided by a company of unusual and varied strength, he advanced still further the reputation already won by his Shakespearian revivals. 'The Tempest' and 'Henry V.' were produced with a completeness and a sense of the picturesque hitherto unknown. The public crowded to see them, and proved that no truly well-directed effort to make the theatre a place of high intellectual recreation will be made in vain. Mr. Macready notes, on June 20, 1839, as 'not a common event,' that 'The Tempest' was acted fifty-five nights, to an average of £250 a night. But these performances were distributed throughout the season.

To have run this or any other piece, however successful, night after night, as we now see done,

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was a thing then undreamt of. A practice so fatal to the actors as artists, not to speak of the mere fatigue, is the result of the merely commercial spirit on which theatres are now conducted. The most successful plays were, in those days, alternated with others. Thus the actors, if they had not complete rest, had, at least, the rest of change. They came fresh to their work, instead of falling into mechanical routine. How much the public also gained by this, it is needless to say. Play after play was brought before them, in which the performers were seen at their best. They learned to understand good acting; and this appreciation reacted beneficially on the actors, who felt that good and careful work was never thrown away. Bulwer again came to the help of his friend by writing 'Richelieu,' where he fitted him with a part that gave scope for his best qualities—intensity, strong powers of contrast, and a certain grim humour, It proved one of the great successes of the season. Every character was in able hands. Elton, Diddear, Warde, Anderson, Vining, Phelps, George Bennett, Howe, and Helen Faucit, all names of strength, appeared in the cast. Never was dramatist more fortunate than to be so interpreted. Never had manager such a staff.

The season passed off brilliantly; but Mr. Macready was dissatisfied with the money results. It seems to have left him £1,200 in pocket—certainly a most poor return for all the intellect and energy

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expended. Mr. Macready, at all events, thought he could not afford to persevere in the course he had so well begun, and he retired from the management at the end of the season. Of the warmth of the public he could not complain. On the last night (July 16, 1839) he notes:

'My reception was so great from a house crowded in every part that I was shaken by it. . . . The curtain fell amidst the loudest applauses, and when I had changed my dress I went before the curtain, and, amidst shoutings and wavings of hats and handkerchiefs by the whole audience standing up, the stage was literally covered with wreaths, bouquets, and branches of laurel. . . . The cheering was renewed, as I bowed and left the stage; and as I passed through the lane which the actors and people, crowding behind, made for me, they cheered me also. Forster came into my room, and was much affected; [W. J.] Fox was much shaken; Dickens, Maclise, Stanfield, T. Cooke, Blanchard, Lord Nugent (who had not been in the theatre), Bulwer, Hockley of Guildford, Browning, Serle, Wilmot, came into my room; most of them asked for memorials from the baskets and heaps of flowers, chaplets, and laurels that were strewn upon the floor.'

The same enthusiasm was shown at a public dinner, four days later, given to him at the Freemasons' Tavern, and presided over by the Duke of Sussex. When he rose to speak, he says: 'I never witnessed such a scene, such wild enthusiasm, on any former occasion.' In the course of his speech he stated that his hope and intention had been—

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'to have left in our theatre the complete series of Shakespeare's acting-plays, his text purified from the gross interpolations that disfigure it and distort his characters; and the system of re-arrangement so perfected throughout them, that our stage would have presented, as it ought, one of the best illustrated editions of the poet's works. But,' he added, 'my poverty, and not my will, has compelled me to desist from the attempt.'

Much good had, however, been done, and the truth had been brought home to many minds that, as Shakespeare wrote for the stage, and not for the closet, his plays, to be thoroughly felt and understood, must be acted, not read.

All that Mr. Macready had lost at Covent Garden he soon retrieved by the increased value of his engagements elsewhere. Mr. Webster secured him for the Haymarket Theatre upon most liberal terms, engaging at the same time Miss Helen Faucit and several other members of the Covent Garden Company, who thus kept alive the interest in the higher drama which they had helped to create. Bulwer's 'Sea Captain' and 'Money,' Talfourd's 'Glencoe,' Troughton's 'Nina Sforza,' and other plays of mark, in addition to many of the older plays, were all produced by Mr. Webster with a finish no less complete — allowing for the size of the theatre — than had distinguished the recent performances at Covent Garden. Mr. Macready continued at the Haymarket, with slight interruptions, down to the end of 1841. While

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there thoughts of resuming the managerial sceptre revived in his mind. 'The stage,' he notes on January 27, 1841, 'seems to want me. There is no theatre, but that to a man with a family is no argument; there is no theatre for me, and that is an overwhelming plea. Then much may be done of good in all ways.' Soon after Drury Lane passed out of Mr. Bunn's hands, and the temptation of reigning in his stead became irresistible. Mr. Macready took the theatre, and opened his season with 'The Merchant of Venice,' on December 27, 1841, having again drawn round him a most powerful company.

His return to management was hailed with sincere pleasure by every lover of the drama. 'Acis and Galatea,' produced on February 5, was his first great success. Those who remember what Stanfield did for the one scene of the piece, and the fine singing of Miss Romer, Miss Horton, Mr Allen, and Mr. Phillips, will quite concur with Mr. Macready when he says of the performance, 'that he had never seen anything of the kind so perfectly beautiful.' Gerald Griffin's fine play of 'Gisippus,' in which, we remember, Mr. Anderson produced a very powerful effect in one remarkable scene, was produced on February 23 following. It had only a *succès d'estime*. Darley's 'Plighted Troth,' produced on April 20, from which Mr. Macready to the last anticipated a brilliant success, proved 'a most unhappy failure.' The play was full of

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fine things. So, too, was William Smith's 'Athelwold,' produced on May 18; but not even the fine acting and more than one powerful scene could carry it beyond a second performance. 'Marino Faliero' followed on May 20, and two nights afterwards the season closed.

During this season, as well as during that which followed, success was chiefly assured, either by the admirable style in which Shakespeare's best known plays were presented, or by plays of already established reputation. 'As You Like it,' 'King John,' 'Othello,' 'Macbeth,' 'Much Ado About Nothing,' 'Cymbeline,' 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'Hamlet,' 'The Winter's Tale,' 'Julius Cæsar,' 'Henry IV.,' and 'Catherine and Petruchio,' represented Shakespeare. 'She Stoops to Conquer,' 'The School for Scandal,' 'The Rivals,' 'The Way to Keep Him,' 'The Provoked Husband,' 'The Jealous Wife,' 'The Stranger,' 'The Road to Ruin,' 'Jane Shore,' 'Virginius,' 'Werner,' 'The Lady ot Lyons,' 'Marino Faliero,' and 'Acis and Galatea,' were also given, besides a number of minor pieces. Milton's 'Comus' was presented in a way never to be forgotten; while among the new pieces of exceptional merit were Marston's 'Patrician's Daughter,' Browning's 'Blot on the Scutcheon,' Knowles's 'Secretary,' Planché's delightful Easter piece, 'Fortunio,' and the opera of 'Sappho.' It is a splendid list, and the memory of the playgoer of those days naturally kindles as he reads it. In

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these diaries, however, nothing will strike him as so noteworthy as Mr. Macready's total silence as to those by whose co-operation alone he was able to produce this magnificent series of performances. Of himself, and how he acted, and was called for, etc., we hear more than enough ; but no word appears of gratitude or recognition for loyal service rendered, and for powers of a high class applied by others with sincere artistic devotion, as they most certainly were.

In the midst of success apparently unclouded, and when it seemed as if a theatre were now likely to be established worthy of England and its drama, Mr. Macready suddenly threw up the reins, upon some difference with the proprietors of the theatre about terms. All at once, upon a few days' notice, and without explanation of any kind, his fine company found themselves thrown all adrift, and their hopes of seeing one great national theatre annihilated. The blow fell heavily upon them, and they had not even the consolation of being called to mind by their leader when he was receiving what he describes as the 'mad acclaim' of the public on the last night of his management. Again the honours of a public dinner, with the Duke of Cambridge in the chair, and the presentation of a magnificent piece of plate, were accorded to the retiring manager. His speech on the occasion is given in his Memoirs, but not even in it does he say one word about the very remarkable body

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of performers who had so ably seconded his efforts. His own sensitiveness to ingratitude, real or imagined, had not taught Mr. Macready to avoid the sin in his own person. Time does its work of oblivion quickly, and the readers of dramatic history should be reminded that there were actors and actresses in Mr. Macready's companies, to whose assistance very much of the great reputation of his management was due, for from his published diaries they will get no hint of the fact. Where his own effects are marred by the incompetency of others, whether in this country or in America, Mr. Macready is always ready to note the fact with almost peevish soreness; but in no one instance does he mention any man or woman as having helped him in bringing out the full purpose of the author, or in heightening the effect of his own scenes.

In the autumn of this year he went to America, with the glories of his Drury Lane management fresh upon him. They brought him a liberal return for all his pains. After a year spent in the States he came home richer by £5,500 than he had gone there—no bad return for what it pleases him to call (April 22, 1844) 'the worst exercise of a man's intellect.' On arriving in Europe at the end of 1844, he played for a few nights in Paris, not greatly, it would appear, to his own satisfaction, and then entered upon a series of engagements in London and the provinces, which

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occupied him, with varying success, till his return to America in the end of 1848. This visit was, upon the whole, an unlucky one. It brought him into contact with some of the worst features of the 'rowdyism' by which the great Republic was at that time afflicted. Mr. Forrest, a native and favourite actor, in resentment at some offence given him by Mr. Macready, or imagined, had apparently determined to make the land of freedom too hot to hold the English tragedian. When Mr. Macready, soon after his arrival, appeared in Philadelphia, hissing and catcalls greeted his entry as Macbeth. 'I went through the part,' he writes, 'cheerily and defyingly, pointing at the scoundrels such passages as "I dare do all,"' etc. No wonder that the discharge at the usurper, first of a copper cent and then of a rotten egg, followed this very undignified style of sending home his points. The better part of the audience supported Mr. Macready, and no further outbreak occurred. But when he returned to New York a few months afterwards, the Forrest movement assumed a more serious shape. The first night he appeared, copper cents, eggs, apples, a peck of potatoes, lemons, pieces of wood, a bottle of asafœtida, were thrown upon the stage. At last the missiles grew even more miscellaneous and dangerous. Chairs were thrown from the gallery on the stage, and the play had to be brought to a premature close. Two days afterwards another attempt at performance was made. But this time

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matters were more serious. Inside the theatre comparative quiet was maintained, but outside a complete bombardment of stones and missiles was carried on. Through all this riot Mr. Macready persevered, 'acting his very best,' as he says, 'and exciting the audience to a sympathy even with the glowing words of fiction, while dreadful deeds of real crime and outrage were roaring at intervals in our ears, and rising to madness all round us. The death of Macbeth was loudly cheered.' But while he was changing his dress he was startled by volley on volley of musketry. The soldiers had been sent for, and were firing into the mob. Eighteen were killed and many wounded. Macready was with difficulty got away from New York to Boston, where he embarked for England on May 23, 1849, effectually cured of his dream of settling in America —effectually cured, too, of his faith in the perfections of a Republic.

On his return home he commenced a series of farewell engagements. Happily for himself, he seems at this period to have viewed his own performances with something more than complacency. It was scarcely judicious to let the world see the terms of high commendation with which he mentions his own Iago, Brutus, Lear, Hamlet, etc. But notwithstanding all this, he records (February 26, 1851) that 'not one feeling of regret is intermingled with his satisfaction at bidding adieu to the occupation of his life.' That same

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evening saw him for the last time upon the stage. The play was 'Macbeth,' and the stage that of Drury Lane. 'I acted Macbeth,' he says, 'with a reality, a vigour, a truth, a dignity, that I never before threw into the delineation of this favourite character.' The audience were in no critical mood; they had come to do honour to one to whom they owed much pure pleasure from an art which they, at least, did not despise, and they thought of little else. Such were the greeting and farewell they gave him, that he says, 'No actor has ever received such testimony of respect and regard in this country.'* His triumph did not end here. Four days afterwards a public dinner, at which six

* Here Mr. Macready's memory must have deceived him. He was in London when John Kemble left the stage, and must have known well the extraordinary greeting and farewell the public gave him. At his farewell performance Ludwig Tieck was present, and describes the scene in his 'Dramaturgische Blätter.' 'The loudest burst of applause,' he writes, 'I have ever heard, even in Italy, was but feeble compared to the indescribable din which, after the curtain fell, arose on every side. There were thousands present, packed closely together, and the huge area of the house was changed into one vast machine, which produced a supernatural clangour and jubilation, men and women shouting, clapping, smiting the sides of the boxes, might and main, with fans and sticks.' The papers of the day tell the same story. But Kemble was not allowed to retire for his rest to Lausanne, where he died, till he had received the homage of a great banquet (June 27, 1817), presided over by Lord Holland, at which many of the most eminent men of the day were

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hundred guests were assembled, was given to him. His constant friend, Sir E. L. Bulwer, presided, and around him were gathered many of the most distinguished men of the day. The chairman pronounced a brilliant panegyric, and the speaking generally was good. One speech appeared in the papers, and is reprinted with the 'Reminiscences,' which we well remember was not spoken. It had been prepared by the Chevalier Bunsen, and was by far the ablest of them all; but his turn to speak

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present, and for which Campbell wrote his fine address, in which he says of the guest of the evening that—

'His was the spell o'er hearts,
Which only acting lends:
The youngest of the sister arts,
Where all their beauty blends.'

Poetry, he goes on to say, fails often to find the full and fitting tone for its thoughts; and painting,

'Mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance of time;
But, by the mighty actor brought,
Illusion's wedded triumphs come—
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And sculpture to be dumb'—

lines of which Mr. Macready, being an actor, must have been proud as an exquisite tribute to the actor's art. Nor was this all, for on the same occasion was presented to Mr. Kemble a vase upon a silver tripod, designed by Flaxman and executed by Storr, with two classical groups in low relief. This masterpiece in design and workmanship, which had passed into the hands of Sir Henry Irving, was sold at Christie and Manson's on December 16, 1905.

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came so late in the programme that Bunsen merely substituted for it a very few words.

The curtain could not have fallen upon a more splendid close to an honourable career. Surely all these honours, these unreserved gratulations, might have made Mr. Macready forget his old apprehensions that he was looked down upon because he was an actor. But no, the same feeling remained, though with it comes the absurd conviction that, because he is an actor no longer, he 'can now look his fellow-men, whatever their station, in the face, and assert his equality' (Diary, March 19, 1851). He quite forgets that, had he not been an actor, he would have been nobody. The applause, the 'salutations in the market-place,' so precious to a man of his temperament, would never have been his. The grandson of the Dublin upholsterer would have had no 'Reminiscences' to write, no name to be proud of, or to be carried down to generations beyond his own.

Mr. Macready survived his retirement from the stage more than twenty-two years, which he spent first at Sherborne and afterwards at Cheltenham, where he died on April 27, 1873. It was his fate to see many of his 'dear ones laid in earth.' His wife and most of his children preceded him to the grave. He married most happily, a second time, in 1860. Removed from the stage and its jealousies, all his fine qualities had freer scope, and we think now with pleasure of his venerable and

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noble head, as we saw it last in 1871, and of the sweet smile of his beautiful mouth, which spoke of the calm wisdom of a gentle and thoughtful old age. We have reason to know, from his letters in our possession, that he looked back with yearning fondness to the studies and pursuits which had made him famous. The fretful jealousies, the passionate wilfulness of the old times, seemed to have faded into the dim past, and no longer marred the memory of kindness shown, and loyal service rendered to him. He had done much good work in the sphere which Providence had assigned him, and we believe had learned to know that it was not for him to repine, if 'the Divinity that shapes our ends' had so shaped his that his work in life was to be accomplished upon the stage.

Personal Note.

[My first meeting with Mr. Macready was remarkable. Early in the spring of 1846 I had occasion to make a professional visit to Torquay. My engagements in London were so numerous and urgent that, leaving London on Saturday, I was bound to be back for consultations by Monday morning. The Great Western Railway then went no further than Exeter. There was a good stage-coach to Torquay on Saturday afternoon, but I found on inquiry that, in order to return next day, one must post. When the waiter told me this, as I lunched at the Exeter Hotel, he added: 'There is

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a gentleman in the next room, who has to be in London early on Monday, and has asked me how this has to be managed.' Upon this, handing the waiter my card, I asked him to take it to the gentleman in question, and say that I should be happy to arrange with him to post from Torquay to Exeter next day. Very quickly a tall, handsome man came into the room. He told me he was taking his two boys to school at Torquay, but must get back to London by next night. It was soon settled between us, that he should call at my hotel at eight o'clock next morning, and travel with me in the chaise which I should have ready for our journey. Punctually at eight he came, and we started. It was a perfect spring morning. Sunshine and the beauty of the country, with a wealth of wild flowers dappling the banks of the roads through which we passed, animated our spirits—at least, I know that our conversation never flagged, and that I thought myself in great good luck to have a companion with whom I found myself in complete sympathy on the many varied subjects —especially in literature and art—which sprang up for discussion. We had got over more than half the journey, when my companion quoted a line from either 'Coriolanus' or 'Julius Cæsar'—I cannot remember which. 'You are an actor,' was my instant thought, for such perfect delivery of the line, I felt, would never be found except in one accustomed to the stage. What actor? I next

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asked myself. There was but one with whom I could identify such elocution, and him I had seen in 'Richelieu' only two nights before, and in 'Lear' on the previous Wednesday. What was to be done? My companion had not given me his card nor mentioned his name, imagining, no doubt, that I must have known one who was so familiar to the public eye. I was quite at a loss what to do, because to say I had not known him implied a rebuke for his not having either given me his card in return for mine or told me his name. And to say that I found him out by his delivery of a line of Shakespeare was not likely to be agreeable to a man who, I knew, was by no means proud of his profession. After continuing the conversation awhile, I took an opportunity to ask 'If I had not the pleasure of having Mr. Macready as my fellow-traveller?' He made some courteous reply, and then our talk went on as before. I remember the enthusiasm with which he spoke of Hood's 'Song of the Shirt' and 'Bridge of Sighs,' which had recently appeared, and a long discussion on Sir Henry Taylor's 'Philip van Artevelde,' also recently published, for which I shared his admiration. This came back vividly to my mind when that play was produced by him a few years after at the Princess Theatre, and failed, as it could not fail to do, crushed by the criticism that it was 'Macready in five acts,' as in truth it was.

To London we journeyed together, and I had

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a most agreeable recollection of the hours of pleasant talk with the great tragedian—talk full on his part of knowledge and of anecdote—who reminded me in nothing of the actor save by his beautifully articulated speech, less rarely to be met with then than it is, alas! now. A few days afterwards an invitation to dinner came from Mr. Macready, which, although then only on a brief visit to London, I was able to accept. At his table were several distinguished men of letters, to meet whom was a great satisfaction to my youthful enthusiasm. It was many years before we met again, but the acquaintance then resumed was kept up to the last. He had a beautiful old age, of which a most pleasant picture is given in the late Lady Pollock's 'Macready as I Knew Him,' London, 1884.]

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RACHEL

It is now rather more than forty long years since all that was mortal of Rachel was laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery at Père la Chaise. There are not many living who saw her in the days of her power, or who remember the deep regret that her decline and early death created among her brother and sister artistes, and the sympathetic pity that followed her to her last resting-place. The streets through which the funeral procession passed were thronged; and around her grave on that bleak, dark, showery January day (January 11, 1858) were gathered all the Parisian men and women of distinction in her own art. There, too, might be seen all the leaders in literature and the fine arts, whom Paris held most in honour, come to pay the last sad homage to one whose genius had often thrilled their hearts and stirred their imaginations as no other actress of her time had done. How many blanks in that brilliant array can even now be counted! Of these, Rachel's great teacher, Samson, to whom she owed so much, Monrose, the elder Dumas, Villemain, Scribe, Sainte Beuve,

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Alfred de Vigny, Mérimée, Jules Janin, Halévy, Théophile Gautier, Baron Taylor, Emile de Girardin, are but a few of the most conspicuous. As one reads the record, the old, old question starts up, 'Where are they all, the old familiar faces?' Fading fast away, like the fame of her whom they had met to mourn, into that dim twilight of memory, which for most of them will soon deepen into unbroken night.

'Pauvre femme! Ah, la pauvre femme!' were the words that broke again and again from the old but ever-young Déjazet, as she tried in vain to make her way through the dense crowd in the cemetery to throw a huge bouquet of violets into the grave. They are words which were often used in Rachel's life by those who knew its sad story. They are the words that rise naturally to our lips as we lay down the volume published, in 1859, by M. Georges d'Heylli, 'Rachel d'après sa Correspondance,' in which it has been told in fuller detail and with a kindlier spirit, than in any of the numerous biographies by which it was preceded.

What a strange, sad story it is! The years of childhood and girlhood spent in poverty, in squalor, and privation, passing suddenly into a blaze of European fame—the homage of the leaders of society and of thought laid at the feet of one whom they looked upon as 'a thing inspired'—wealth pouring in profusion into her lap—the passionate aspiration of the young spirit after

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excellence in her art, and the triumphs there, which were more to her than either wealth or the plaudits of the theatre. Then the melancholy reverse of the picture! A life wherein that which makes the main charm and glory of womanhood is sought for in vain—the practice of her noble art, continued not from delight in its exercise, or with purpose to raise and to instruct, degenerating into a mere mechanical pursuit, swiftly avenged by the decline of that power which had once enabled her to move men's hearts to their inmost depths, and by the break-up of her constitution, taxed as it was beyond endurance in efforts to make as much money as possible in the shortest possible time. Then disease—acute bodily suffering—anguish in the retrospect of a mistaken life, and in forebodings of the eclipse of a fame which was the very breath of her nostrils, yet which she knew too well she had not laboured honourably to maintain—death drawing nearer and nearer, with none of the consolations either in looking backward or forward that rob it of its bitterness, and relentlessly closing its icy hand upon her heart, while that heart still yearned after the scene of her former glories, and felt some stirrings of the old power which had won them. A sad life indeed, and anything but noble. It is not, however, without instruction, either for artist or critic; for it brings strongly home the too often forgotten truth, that to rise to the level of great art, and to keep there, the inner life and the

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habits of the artist must be worthy, pure, and noble.

Let us try, with the help of M. d'Heylli's volume, and some others which bear upon the subject, to present some of its leading features.

In an *auberge* called the Soleil d'Or, in the small village of Mumf, near Aarau in Switzerland, Elizabeth Félix, the Rachel of the French stage, first saw the light on February 28, 1820. Thither her mother had come a few days before, unaccompanied by her husband, Jacob Félix, a Jewish travelling pedlar, with whom she had for some time been moving about in Germany and Switzerland. The kindness of some of the Israelites of the village helped her over her time of trouble; and a few days afterwards she left the place, taking with her the baby who, she little dreamed, was to bring back Racine, Corneille, and Voltaire to the French stage. Years passed in wandering up and down with her parents, who plied their vocation of pedlars with indifferent success, were not favourable either to the education or to the health of their gifted child, or of their other children—for they had several—and probably laid the seeds of that delicacy of chest which ultimately proved fatal to Rachel. This is all the more probable, if we remember that at Lyons, where her parents went to reside in 1830, and subsequently in Paris, to which they removed in 1832, her elder sister Sophie (afterwards known on the stage as Sarah

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Félix) and herself used to eke out the scanty means of the household by selling oranges, and by singing at the cafés, upon the chance of earning a few sous from the visitors. Sarah, a bright, healthy blonde, found compensation for the hardship of this life in the coarse admiration which her good looks excited. Rachel, pale and plain, had no such consolation, and to her sensitive nature the occupation was full of suffering. This, which no doubt made itself felt in her looks, and the intelligence which must at all times have shown itself in her eyes, attracted the notice of one who had even then given promise of a great future, as the sisters were singing in the Place Royale, and he dropped a five-franc piece into the younger girl's hand. 'That is Victor Hugo!' said a voice within her hearing; and when Rachel had become famous, and a friend of the great poet's, she was not ashamed to relate the incident to her friends.

It was while plying this vocation that the sisters attracted the notice of M. Etienne Choron, a musician who devoted himself to the training of pupils for the musical profession. Rachel's voice was a contralto, but Choron soon found that the organ was of a quality too thin and metallic to give hopes of turning it to any good account. In the course of her training, however, the young girl had shown qualities as a declaimer, which induced him to recommend her to the notice of M. St. Aulaire, of the Comédie Française, who, although an indif-

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ferent actor himself, was esteemed an admirable instructor in declamation and the technical business of the stage.

Through very marked disadvantages of feature and person, he recognised the latent genius of the artist. Her voice, in later years most musical and full of charm, was then harsh and somewhat vulgar in accent; her figure, afterwards remarkable for grace, was stunted and meagre, her face pale and unattractive. She thought that her vocation lay in comedy, and laughed at those who told her that in tragedy she was to look for her future success. Even at the age of fifteen she had shown something of the power by which she was soon afterwards to thrill her audiences with pity and terror. If we may judge from the description of one who saw her at St. Aulaire's establishment in November, 1834, something of the grave, sweet nature which distinguished her bearing when she first appeared in society a few years afterwards must then have been apparent. 'Everything about the child,' he says, 'was of the cheapest and plainest description, but the ensemble conveyed an idea of neatness and even precision. With those older than herself little Rachel was punctiliously polite; grave and simple beyond her years, every feature of the long, childish face bore the impress of modesty and even dignity, with which education had little to do.'

Education had indeed done little for her. What was she likely to learn in the shape of culture in

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the nomadic life and squalid home of her parents? She could read, but her literary knowledge was limited to portions of the plays of Corneille, Racine, and Molière, which were given her to study. She could write, too, but her spelling then and for years afterwards was as bad as it could well be, and her language showed complete ignorance of the simplest grammatical rules.

Under M. St. Aulaire, however, she made rapid progress. She had a quick and retentive memory, and was soon grounded in all the old tragedies and comedies of repute. Her master was in the habit of exercising his pupils upon the stage of an obscure bourgeois theatre, called the 'Théâtre Molière,' in the Rue St. Martin, where performances were given upon Sundays. It was here, as M. Samson mentions in his delightful Memoirs,* that he first saw the young girl, whose subsequent success was in a great measure due to his instructions.

'She had been,' he writes, 'for some time making attempts in tragedy at the theatre of M. St. Aulaire, who, although a Sociétaire of the Comédie Française, only occupied a modest place there. He made his pupils perform, and gave them tickets, which they undertook to dispose of for money. This was the way he made his income. The performances in which Rachel took part were the most lucrative. She was frequently brought before the inhabitants of this part of Paris, and she was applauded and

* 'Mémoires de Samson de la Comédie Française,' Paris, 1882.

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made much of by this homely public; and her renown had even spread beyond the narrow sphere where she paved the way for more serious successes. Some of my pupils, struck by her abilities, spoke of her to me, and inspired me with the desire to judge of her for myself. I went to hear her one day that she played in the "Don Sanche" of Corneille. She astonished me, I admit, in the character of Isabella, Queen of Castille. I was struck by the tragic feeling which she showed. The sacred fire burned in this young and feeble breast. She was then very little, and yet, having a Queen to represent, she dwarfed by her grand manner the actors who surrounded her. These were tall young men unaccustomed to the stage, and her ease of deportment threw their awkwardness into stronger relief. Although forced by her lowness of stature to raise her head to speak to them, the young artist seemed to address them as from above. Still there were here and there, if I may use the phrase, *lacunæ* of intelligence; the character was not perfectly understood—of this there could be no doubt—but all through one felt the presence of the tragic accent; the special gift was manifest at every point, and one already saw by anticipation the great theatrical future of this wonderful child. Between the pieces I went upon the stage to congratulate her. By this time she had donned a man's dress for Andrieux's comedy, "Le Manteau," which was to follow. As I arrived she was playing at some kind of game, in which it was necessary to hop on one foot, and it was in this attitude that I surprised the ex-Queen of Spain. She listened to my compliments with one leg in the air, thanked me very gracefully, and resumed her game.'

A talent of so much promise was sure to attract

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the attention of those whose business it was to find recruits for the great national theatre. M. Vedel, the treasurer, and subsequently the director, of the Comédie Française, saw her play Andromaque at the same little theatre, and was so deeply impressed by a distinction of manner which triumphed over every disadvantage of an undeveloped figure and shabby costume, as well as by the correctness and purity of her elocution, that he procured for her an admission into the Conservatoire. She was then only fifteen years and a half old, but when she appeared before the Areopagus of that great school—Cherubini, d'Henneville, Michelot, Samson, and Provost—she excited their warmest admiration, producing upon them, says M. Samson, 'the same happy impression which she had been in the habit of producing upon less competent hearers.' Samson recorded on the books of the school his opinion of her in the words: 'Physique grêle, mais une admirable organisation théâtrale.'

Owing apparently to a slight being shown her by the directors of the Conservatoire in casting her for the small part of Flipote, the servant, at a representation of 'Tartuffe' by the pupils of the establishment, Rachel retired from this fine school of acting in disgust after a four months' experience. But, through the intervention of her old master, St. Aulaire, she was soon afterwards engaged upon liberal terms by M. Poirson, manager of the

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Gymnase.* Here she made her début on April 4, 1837, in a new drama, called 'La Vendéenne,' by Paul Duport.

The piece, according to Jules Janin, 'ephemeral and slight, of the kind that are acted a few nights and then sink into oblivion,' held the stage chiefly through the interest created by the young débutante. It was acted sixty times, but did not pay. It contained one fine scene, an interview between the Empress Josephine and the young Vendean peasant girl, who has made her way to Paris on foot, like Jeanie Deans in 'The Heart of Midlothian,' to plead for her father's life. Falling at Josephine's feet, she tells her of a vision which inspired her to undertake the task:

'Et du doigt semble elle indiquer
Une Ville inconnue, immense—
Un seul mot rompit la silence;
"Paris!" et puis elle ajouta,
Comme en réponse à ma prière:
Vas y seule, à pied—car c'est là,
Que tu pourras sauver ton père.'†

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* It was now that Rachel discarded her first name, Elizabeth, to be henceforth known by her second, Rachel.

† Years afterwards, when Rachel was lying on a couch in her rooms in the Chaussée d'Antin, surrounded by guests, 'all depressed,' says Jules Janin, 'by the sadness of the young actress, over whom the shadow of death had even then fallen, suddenly with her deep sonorous voice she began chanting these lines, and made them thrill by the expression she gave to the words:

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In the passionate earnestness with which these lines were chanted the same note was struck which was afterwards to be heard in its full power in Phèdre, Camille, and Hermione. 'That little Jewish girl,' Edwin Forrest, the American actor, said to M. Poirson, 'that little bag of bones, with the marble face and the flaming eyes—there is demoniacal power in her. If she live, and do not burn out too soon, she will become something wonderful.' 'This child of fifteen,' wrote Jules Janin, 'acts with much feeling, enthusiasm, and intelligence, but with very little skill. She intuitively understands the part assigned to her. There is no straining for effect, no exaggeration, no cries, no studied attitudes, and, above all, no coquetry; on the contrary, she is extremely quiet and dignified. The child's voice is rough and hoarse, like the voice of a child; her hands are red, like a child's hands; her foot, like her hand, is scarcely formed; she is not pretty, but pleasing—in a word, there is a great future in store for this young genius; and she receives a tribute of tears, emotion, and interest, from the as yet small audience that comes to do her honour.'

Every theatre has its peculiar audience, and the audience of the Gymnase cared more for light

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'Une Ville inconnue, immense.
Paris! . . . .
Vas y seule, à pied—car c'est là,
Que tu pourras sauver ton père.'

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comedy than for strong emotion. To bring them back to their favourite haunt, Rachel undertook the part of Suzette in the 'Mariage de Raison.' For this she wanted the necessary lightness and freedom of touch, and suffered under the disadvantage of being contrasted with Leontine Fay, whose personal charms and flexible grace of style were already identified with the part. Rachel's appearances at the Gymnase showed that a theatre devoted to drama of everyday life was not suited to the severe and impassioned tone, and the large style, in which her genius found its natural vent. Accordingly, her manager, whose faith in her remained unshaken, recommended her to resume her studies for the higher drama, with a view to appearing upon the stage of the Théâtre Français. Then it was, says M. Samson ('Mémoires,' p. 306), 'that I again saw her, and in my own house, to which she had come once before to bid me good-bye'—on her hasty withdrawal, no doubt, from the Conservatoire. 'I had preserved,' continues M. Samson, 'a recollection of her full of regrets, and was very glad to see her again. I became her professor, and eight months afterwards she made her début at the Théâtre Français in the part of Camille in 'Les Horaces.'

M. Samson was the means of securing her an engagement at his theatre so early as February, 1838, but she did not actually appear till June 12. In his journal he records (February 6, 1838) that,

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as she was 'ignorant in the extreme, owing to the poverty of her parents,' he told her father to put her into the hands of Madame Bronzet, the teacher of his own children, for tuition in grammar and history. That lady offered to undertake her instruction for twenty francs a month, and M. Samson continued, as before, to give his own lessons gratis. Of the value of these some estimate may be formed from the fact that, among the great number of distinguished pupils whom he guided to a successful career, were such artists as Mesdames Plessy, Allan, Favart, Madeleine and Augustine Brohan, Rose Chéri, Judith, and Jouassain.

Samson was not the man to allow his pupil to venture on the stage of the great theatre of the Rue Richelieu until he was assured that she would prove herself worthy of its traditions and an honour to her instructor. Besides, she had not only to bear the always heavy ordeal of the candidate before an exacting audience for the honours won and worn by the favourites of the past, but also to win back their attention to the tragedies of Racine and Corneille, which had been thrown for some time into the shade by Victor Hugo and the other writers of the Romantic School. The art of interpreting the great works of the classical drama had for some years fallen into disuse, and they were voted slow by those who had never seen their beauties developed by the histrionic genius to which, more than any other, dramatic work of

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the highest order must always be, in a great measure, indebted for success. Let us hear what M. Samson says on this point:

'Talma, dying in 1826, seemed to have carried classic tragedy away with him. Old gentlemen mourned at this; but their regrets were not shared by the new generation, whose wish was that ruin should overwhelm what they regarded as having had its day. At the moment when the crash of political storms was making itself heard, a literary revolution was carried out. What have been called "the battles of Hernani" set all minds on fire, and the stage had also its 1830. Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire were only played at long intervals, and to empty houses; and these isolated representations only served to show more clearly the public indifference for works of this class, which, after two centuries of triumph and glory, saw themselves relegated for the future to the silence and the dust of libraries. But in 1838, twelve years after the death of our great tragedian, an unexpected event occurred: a reaction, which surprised even those by whom it was desired, brought back to the great classic works a crowd that could not be accommodated within the theatre of the Rue Richelieu, which only yesterday had been so unpeopled. The young and great artist to whom this miracle was due was Rachel.'

The time fixed for Rachel's début was by no means favourable, even if a tragedy of the old school had been attractive, as at that epoch it certainly was not. The time was high summer. Consequently, writes M. Samson,

'She had to show herself for the first time amid

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the solitude habitual on such occasions. The only people there were a sprinkled few in the orchestra-stalls, regular subscribers, and those who had free admissions, either as a rule or for the occasion. Besides the spectators of this class, there were, of course, the never-failing loungers of the *foyer* and the side-scenes. This by no means numerous assemblage is composed of actors who are not playing, and of certain friends of the establishment who, having nothing to do in the evening, drop in to enjoy behind the curtain the pleasure of a chat and of the *far niente*.'

The languid interest with which the audience had entered the theatre hung upon them for a time, but, according to M. Samson, it was soon dispelled:

'In the first three acts the part of Camille contains nothing remarkable, except one scene between her and Julie. The young tragédienne was listened to with interest. People noticed the appropriate emphasis of her elocution, the clearness of her articulation, and, in her action as in her speaking, a noble simplicity to which they had long been unaccustomed. In the fourth act her success was brilliant, and at the end of the celebrated curse she was covered with applause loud enough to have come from an audience of 2,000 spectators.'

There was one person present on the night of Rachel's début—Mademoiselle Mars—whose praise was enough to outweigh a whole theatre of others. She had seen the pale face and wondrous eyes, and heard the vibration of tone in the meagre, half-grown pupil of St. Aulaire two years before, and had then formed the opinion that great things

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might be expected of her. Mars was the daughter of Monvel, 'a tragedian,' according to M. Regnier, 'of the school which set up nature and simplicity both in speech and action for their aim,' as against the artificial and exaggerated style and declamatory sing-song which were then in vogue upon the French tragic stage. Herself a mistress of the art of graceful utterance and graceful motion, no one was better qualified to measure the qualifications of the new candidate for theatrical honours. M. de Varenne, who was in the box with Mars upon the occasion, says:

'When Camille appeared upon the stage, Mars followed her attentively; then, turning to me, she said, with a half nod and a sign of satisfaction: "She walks the stage well." . . . Sabine addresses a few words to Camille, when the latter appears on the stage. Mademoiselle Rachel had not yet opened her lips, when Mars turned to me again, and, regarding me with an air of personal triumph, said: "And she listens well." Listening well is the height of art which few actresses attain—an art as difficult—more difficult, perhaps—than that of speaking well. . . . Camille spoke in her turn. She had scarcely uttered half a dozen lines when Mars exclaimed: "Ah, I told you! she does not declaim, she speaks!" When the famous imprecation came, instead of the classic elevation of the voice and those noisy outbursts of grief which carry away the audience and force applause, Mademoiselle Rachel, either through fatigue, calculation, or disdain of received traditions, uttered these words hoarsely, and with concentrated feeling, so that the public, who expected something very different, did

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not applaud. "Ah!" remarked a young gentleman in the box, "she lacks strength!" "But, sir," Mademoiselle Mars exclaimed, turning sharply to him, as if stung to the quick, "surely you will allow her to husband her strength! Are you afraid she will not grow old soon enough? She grows taller while she acts, this young girl." For my own part, adds M. de Varenne, though far from ill disposed to the young actress, I could not summon up such an amount of admiration, and was struck by Mademoiselle Mars' enthusiasm.'

Rachel repeated the part of Camille several times, and always with increasing success. The receipts, however, did not increase. At first, indeed, they were most miserable: on the first night 753 francs, and on subsequent repetitions of the play 373, 303, and 595 francs respectively. The last sum was reached on August 18, even although attention had by this time been called to the exceptional qualities of the young actress by her appearance in four other important parts of the classical drama. The enthusiasm, however, says M. Samson, 'made up for want of numbers.'

'Her second part,' he continues, 'was Emilie in "Cinna."* I remember well the amazement of the audience. As I write I see before me all their eyes bent upon the young girl, all their ears strained, the better to enjoy this utterance which seemed so novel, and of which the originality consisted in its

* This was played on June 16, 1838, four nights after Rachel's first appearance. She repeated the part on July 11, but not again till September 27.

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being at once natural and grandiose. Her third part was Hermione, then Eriphile, then Amenäide in "Tancrède." Always the same success, but success without rebound, since all the leaders of Parisian society were still at the watering-places, and the few journalists who were left in Paris, appalled by the word "tragedy," could not screw up courage to cross the threshold of the Théâtre Français. At length came the month of October; the number of spectators increased, and my young pupil continued her representations to splendid houses. Oh, those glorious evenings!

'Never shall I forget them, any more than the mornings consecrated to the stage education of my marvellous scholar. I number them among the most delightful hours of my life. What quickness of perception! What nice accuracy in feeling and tone! Bear in mind that this child knew nothing; that I had to explain to her the character of the personage she had to represent, and in a manner to go through a little course of history with her before our lesson of declamation; but when once she understood me, she entered thoroughly into the spirit of the part. Nothing was vague, nothing left to chance. We noted every point together. From the very first her elocution was of the highest order, and worthy to serve as a model. For Mademoiselle Mars, who—being, as she was, the daughter of Monvel, an actor renowned for truth and perfect intonation as a speaker—was an excellent judge, came, after hearing Rachel, to compliment me in the warmest terms, adding these words: "This is how tragedy ought to be spoken; this was the way my father treated it."'

Rachel's greatest success with the public in these early performances was in 'Amenäide,' which she

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performed for the first time on August 8. The house had been filled by free admissions of people to whom her very name was unknown. They soon felt that in her they saw no ordinary novice. She was greatly applauded throughout the piece, and was recalled at its close, when a bouquet and wreath were flung to her—these were days in which such recalls and floral tributes had a real significance — but still the receipts showed no symptoms of improvement. On this night they only reached 625 francs. Upon this, the lady who was entitled, by her position in the theatre, to claim the parts in which Rachel had made her trial performances, importuned the director to bring them to a close. But M. Vedel was firm. He believed that his novice possessed the sacred fire which must ere long attract the worship of the Parisian public, and the representations were continued.

As the shortening days of autumn brought people back to Paris, they heard of the new star that had begun to shine in the theatrical firmament. The leading critics resumed their labours. Chief among them, Jules Janin, the theatrical critic of the *Journal des Débats*, was persuaded to see her (September 4) in Hermione, the character of which the best judges had spoken as her masterpiece. He entered the theatre expecting to see only the merely respectable promise, of which he had already seen too much among juvenile débu-

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tantes; he left it convinced that the French stage possessed in this young girl a genius worthy of its best days. His enthusiasm was expressed in his next weekly feuilleton in the *Débats* with so much fervour that public attention was arrested. Janin was not likely to fail to remind the public that he had predicted, in the review of Rachel's performance in 'La Vendéenne,' that 'she possessed talent of no common order, and that a great future lay before her.' Now he proclaimed her as the most marvellous actress his generation had seen upon the stage. People had refused to believe what he foretold of her; 'now she is listened to in the great tragedies of Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, encouraged, applauded.'

'She has found,' he goes on to say, 'the legitimate development of her precocious dramatic genius. It is nothing short of marvellous, this uneducated child, without art, without preparation of any kind'—what must St. Aulaire and Samson have thought of this?—'thus becoming the interpreter of our grand old tragedies! She blows their ashes into a flame by her genius and her energy; and remember she is small, decidedly plain, with a narrow chest, an insignificant appearance, and common speech. Do not ask her who Tancrède, Horace, Hermione are, or about the Trojan War, or Pyrrhus, or Helen. She knows nothing, but she has that which is better than knowledge: she has that sudden illumination, which she throws around her; she grows ten inches taller on the stage; she raises her head, and extends her chest; her eye brightens; she treads like

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a Queen; her voice vibrates with the passion that agitates her. . . . She is a priestess, a Pythoness, this child of seventeen. The curse is the first revelation of Rachel's power. The storm raging in this grief-stricken breast is terrific. We tremble before it as something superhuman, godlike.'

'She knows nothing.' A startling but undoubted fact, well known in the young actress's own circle, and upon which some curious light was thrown by the volume, 'Autographes: Collection Adolphe Crémieux,' published in 1885. Rachel's parents had introduced her in 1838 to M. Crémieux (afterwards conspicuous as one of the Republican leaders in 1848), whose practice as an *avocat* brought him much into contact with the Jewish fraternity in Paris. Both he and his wife grew warmly attached to Rachel—so much so that she became a very 'enfant de la maison.' Crémieux took her education in hand. Her orthography, as already mentioned, was villainous. But Rachel hated writing, or task-work of any kind. She would begin to yawn after a few minutes' work with the pen, and could not be got to fix her attention on spelling or syntax or the formation of her letters. But talk or read to her, and she was all attention, and she never forgot what she learned under the guidance of M. and Mdme. Crémieux in this way. How much she had to learn may be judged by her asking them, when reading the first chapter of Genesis, what 'the firmament' was.

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It was well for her social reputation in those days that she had such kind and intelligent friends to put her in the way of repairing her educational deficiencies. How awkwardly these sometimes placed her is well illustrated by an incident which occurred at the Crémieux dinner-table the day after one of her most successful first appearances in 'Les Horaces.' Next her at table sat a young man from Bordeaux, who spoke enthusiastically of the rare good fortune by which he, a poor provincial, had been able to see her. 'What a splendid creation is your impersonation of Camille!' he exclaimed. 'One does not know when to admire you most: whether in the curse, which was never given with such tragic fury, or while you are listening to the story of the death of the Horatii. What marvellous pantomime at the moment of the *Qu'il mourût!*'* At this Rachel whispered to Crémieux, who sat on her other side, 'What is it, this *Qu'il mourût*'? 'Hush!' replied Crémieux, 'say nothing; later on I will tell you.' When all the company had retired, Rachel, who had been the queen of the evening, came up to her host. 'Now, seriously,'

* 'Les Horaces,' act iii., scene 6, the famous reply of the elder Horatius to Julia, when his invective against his third son for having fled from the field is met by the question, 'Que vouliez vous qu'il fît contre trois?' Camille is present throughout the scene, but has not to speak. Hence Rachel's ignorance of what Voltaire calls 'ce trait du plus grand sublime, ce mot auquel il n'en est aucun de comparable dans toute l'antiquité.'

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he said to her, 'do you not know what the famous *Qu'il mourût* is?' 'I assure you I do not,' was her answer. 'What, then, do you read when you learn a part?' 'My own part and the answers.'

Had Crémieux been learned in the ways of actors, he would not have been so surprised at this revelation as he was. Stage history tells of many eminent actors, as well as actresses, who, after the practice of years, have been content to remain quite as much in the dark as to every part of the plays, even of Shakespeare, except what they had themselves to speak. Is this ignorance even now a stranger to our own stage? It is very strange, however, that Rachel should not have been taught better things by such masters as St. Aulaire and Samson. M. Crémieux did his best to correct the omission, and she proved an apt pupil in seizing the whole features of the story, which the character she had to represent was intended to illustrate.

Encouraged by the criticism of Janin on Rachel's Hermione, those who had seen the débutante were emboldened to give voice to the admiration which they had felt, but had hitherto feared to express. The effect was seen in a great increase of the receipts the next night. Another article by Jules Janin a fortnight later (September 24, 1838), written in still more enthusiastic terms, effectually roused the Parisian public. The theatre became thronged to an extent hitherto unknown. People spent hours in waiting for the opening of the doors.

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Hundreds were turned away disappointed. The new idol became the one great topic of conversation in all societies.

From this moment the receipts of the house ran up to a figure calculated to make every member of the Comédie Française happy. Twenty-five pounds a night was the average return of Rachel's first eighteen performances. For the next eighteen it was within a fraction of £200 a night—a receipt of which nothing would now be thought, but which was then regarded as magnificent. In fact, M. Vedel, the director of the theatre, himself described it as 'colossal'; and he proved his sincerity by raising Rachel's salary, at the end of October, from 4,000 to 20,000 francs.

Her father, ever thinking less of his daughter's art as art than as a valuable commodity for sale, two months afterwards demanded that it should be raised to 40,000, or exactly ten times the modest £160 a year which in June, when they were living *au sixième* in the Rue Traversaire St. Honoré, had been regarded by the family as wealth. The demand was resisted, but only for a time. The theatre found it could not get on without Rachel, and she could therefore dictate her own terms—an advantage which neither she nor those around her were likely to forego. The 40,000 francs demand soon rose to 60,000, and had to be conceded.*

* This was the sum stipulated for by Rachel in 1840, when she attained majority, and was free to act for herself.

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But while papa and mama Félix were thinking only of making up for the privations of the past by raising the family income to the highest possible figure, Rachel herself was straining every nerve, by unremitting study and meditation, to gratify and to maintain the admiration she had excited, adding several new parts to her *répertoire*, and augmenting her reputation by them all. Among these was Roxane in Racine's 'Bajazet,' a character which it wanted no small courage in a girl so young, and, of necessity, so inexperienced in the passions by which it is inspired, even to think of undertaking. But courage was a quality in which Rachel was never deficient; and with the precepts of M. Samson to enlighten her, she yielded to M. Vedel's request, and allowed herself to be announced for the part on November 29.

The house was crammed with an audience prepared to admire. But when Rachel came to grapple with the part upon the stage, she lost her nerve; her declamation showed none of its wonted fire, her gestures none of their wonted appropriate

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The exorbitance of her demands then and subsequently made her very unpopular with her associates of the theatre; for although the receipts upon the nights she acted were very great, they fell off so much on the nights she did not act, that the balance for general distribution was kept very low indeed. So completely, in fact, did the public reserve itself for Rachel, that the interests of the other members of the establishment suffered rather than profited by her success.

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and spontaneous grace, and the sullen silence which reigned through the house on the fall of the curtain was only too significant of entire failure. Anxious to mitigate the censure of Rachel's stanchest friend in the press, M. Vedel visited Jules Janin the next day. They were discussing the disaster of the previous night, when Rachel herself was announced. 'She was greatly agitated and embarrassed,' writes M. Vedel, who told the story years afterwards. 'She hung down her head, said nothing, and looked for all the world like a culprit before her judge.' Janin received her most kindly, and tried to cheer her, but told her plainly—for he was a man true to his responsibilities as a critic—that, notwithstanding all the interest and affection he felt for her, he could not speak favourably of her performance. 'Poor Rachel wept scalding tears, like a scolded child. We did our best to comfort her, Janin sparing no pains in this direction, but insisting, nevertheless, that she should not repeat the part.' On this point, however, he and M. Vedel were by no means at one, for Vedel was satisfied that Rachel would quickly retrieve her failure. Accordingly, as he drove her home he told her that, despite M. Janin, the play should be repeated the next night but one, and she promised to be ready. This her father tried to prevent, but M. Vedel's resolution was not to be shaken. After a stormy scene, in which papa Félix found his threat that his daughter should not play fell upon deaf

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ears, M. Vedel wrote to Rachel, urging her in the kindest terms not to listen to her father, or to put her future in peril by violating the terms of her engagement. This brought the following reply:

'Ne suis-je a vos ordres? Quand on aime les gens, on fait tout pour *leurs* plaire. Tout à vous.* —RACHEL.'

The next morning Jules Janin's article appeared. It was remorseless:

'What,' it said, 'were people about in making her play Roxane? How could this child divine a passion of the senses, not of the soul? . . . This delicate girl, this puny, overtasked frame, this undeveloped bosom, this troubled tone—could these suffice to represent the stalwart lioness whom we call Roxane? Mdlle. Rachel appeared, and in an instant the house felt she was unequal to the task: this was not the Roxane of the poet; it was a young girl astray in the seraglio.'

Not pleasant reading this for the director, still less for the young actress. Putting the best face on matters which he could, M. Vedel went to her dressing-room before the play began. He found her ready, and looking superb in her sultana cos-

* Rachel's grammar, like her spelling, was very shaky at this time, and, indeed, to judge from her published letters, was never perfect. 'You little pedant,' she is reported to have said to her favourite sister, Rebecca, who had dropped something about the defects of the great tragedian's grammar, 'let me tell you, women such as I make and unmake grammar as they please.'

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tume. 'Well, child,' he exclaimed, 'how do you feel?' 'Oh, well,' she answered, smiling, 'I have forced them to let me have my way, but it has cost me no small trouble. I had a terrible struggle to face; I believe things will go better to-night.' 'You are not afraid, then?' 'No.' 'I like this confidence; it augurs well. You have read Janin's article?' 'Yes; he pays me out finely. I am furious, but so much the better. It has strung me up. Anger is sometimes a useful stimulant.'

'To strive, to seek, to fight, and not to yield,' is the creed of genius. With the young Rachel it was a law. Accordingly, her performance that night completely effaced the impression of her former failure. It even threw all her previous successes into shade. The audience were in raptures. She was recalled at the end of the play with frantic applause, and an avalanche of bouquets descended upon her in such profusion that they had to be removed by the servants of the theatre. After the play M. Vedel repaired to her dressing-room, when, making her way through the crowd of voluble admirers that filled it, she threw herself into his arms, exclaiming, 'Thanks! thanks! I felt sure that you were right.'

From this point Rachel's position as the foremost actress of her class was secure, and as she gained in physical strength and in experience, her hold upon her audiences became greater and greater; for in these early days she prosecuted her studies with

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enthusiasm, and her heart was filled with high aspirations after an exalted ideal.

M. Samson's description of her person and style in her early and best days, between 1840 and 1845, will recall her vividly to those who had then the good fortune to see her:

'Rachel,' he says, 'was over the middle height; her forehead was arched, her eyes deeply set, and, without being large, very expressive; her nose straight, with, however, a slight curve in it. Her mouth, furnished with small teeth, white and well set, had an expression at once sarcastic and haughty. Her throat was perfect in its lines, and her head, small and with a low forehead, was set gracefully upon it. She was very thin, but she dressed with an art so subtle as to make of this thinness almost a beauty. Her walk and gestures were easy, all her movements supple—her whole person, in short, full of distinction. She had, to use a common expression, the hands and feet of a duchess.* Her

* This description may be compared with that given by Mrs. Fanny Kemble in her 'Records of Later Days,' vol. ii., p. 99, where she speaks, writing in June, 1841, of Rachel as 'of a very good height, too thin for beauty, but not for dignity or grace. . . . Her face is very expressive and dramatically fine, though not absolutely beautiful. It is a long oval, with a head of classical and very graceful contour, the forehead rather narrow and not very high; the eyes small, dark, deep set, and terribly powerful; the brow straight, noble, and fine in form.' As we write, we have before us a medallion profile, life-size, of Rachel, and a cast of her hand, closed upon the dagger she used as Roxane — both gifts from herself, in 1841, to Helen Faucit, who had gone to Paris to see the actress whose fame had naturally created an interest in one who had herself, in 1836, risen, while yet a mere girl,

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voice, which was a contralto, was limited in its compass; but, thanks to the extreme accuracy of her ear, she used it with exquisite skill, and drew from it the finest and most delicate inflections. When she began to speak her tones were a little hoarse, but this soon went off.

'When she first appeared at the Comédie Française her figure had not reached the development which it subsequently acquired: there was in her small features, in her close-set eyes, a sort of confusion, if I may be allowed the expression, and people said she was ugly. Later on they said she was beautiful. In point of fact, she was neither the one nor the other, but both, according to the hour, the day, the expression which dominated her face.

'Ah!' he continues, 'how to give an idea of this admirable talent to those who have not heard her? I, who taught her for so many years the secret of the art, am forced to own how impotent are my attempts to make her known. . . . The talent of the actor descends to the grave with him, and the recollections which he has left with his admirers —recollections always imperfect — fade away by degrees from the memory, and perish at last with the generation that loved and applauded him.'

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into the highest rank in her profession. They met in the houses of some of the best families of the Quartier St. Germain. To beauty, in so far as that consists of finely balanced symmetry of outline, Rachel could lay no claim; but her features had pre-eminently that 'best part of beauty,' due to play of expression, which, as Bacon has said, 'no art can express.' Her hand was small and beautifully formed, and even in the cast shows how intense was the nervous force which she threw into her action. The photogravure prefixed to p. 193 of this volume very aptly represents the medallion above referred to.

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We find an account of her, in what was the most interesting period of her history, in a letter written in May, 1839, by Alfred de Musset to a female friend, which appeared in the volume of his posthumous works published in 1867. It is one of those vivid sketches which only a poet could have written, and it places the young artist before us in lines never to be forgotten. The 'noble *enfant*,' as De Musset calls her, had played Amenäide in 'Tancrède' that evening superbly; and in the great scene of the fifth act she had seemed to De Musset to surpass herself. She told him that she had herself been so much overcome by emotion, her tears falling thick and fast, that she had been afraid she would have broken down. Emotion so strong, all great actors have said, is generally fatal to true artistic effect.* But Rachel was then young in her

* Thus Talma writes: 'Acting is a complete paradox; we must possess the power of strong feeling, or we could never command and carry with us the sympathy of a mixed audience in a crowded theatre; but we must, at the same time, control our sensations on the stage, for their indulgence would enfeeble execution.' So again, M. Samson says ('Mémoires,' p. 39): 'An actor who should regard his own emotions in any other light than as materials to be made use of, or make the passions of his part his own, would run the risk of a fiasco. Emotion stammers and sobs. It makes the voice broken and unsteady. Indulged, it would cease to be articulate. The natural effect of passion is to deprive us of self-control. The head goes; and why should you suppose that one should do a thing well rather than ill when one has ceased to know what one is doing at all?' The truth, according to the best

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vocation, and had not learned the self-control of the practised artist.

She was on her way home from the theatre, with a train of young friends of both sexes, when the poet met her under one of the arcades of the Palais Royal. 'Come home and sup with us,' she said; and home to her father's homely apartment in the Passage Véro Dodat the party went. They had scarcely sat down when Rachel discovered that she had left her rings and bracelets at the theatre. The maid-servant—the household had but one—was despatched to fetch them. Mama Rachel was famishing; others of the guests were conscious of a void that cried aloud to be filled. But, alas! there was no servant to get the supper ready or to serve it up. Rachel solved the difficulty.

'She rises,' writes De Musset, 'goes off to change her dress, and repairs to the kitchen. In quarter of an hour she returns in a dressing-gown and night-cap, a handkerchief over her ears, pretty as an angel, holding in her hand a dish, on which are three beef-steaks, cooked by her own hand. She sets down the dish in the middle of the table, saying, "Fall to!" Then she returns to the kitchen, and comes

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authorities, seems to be, that to be great an actor or actress must, in studying a part, feel all the emotions proper to it, be shaken by passion, weep tears over it, live through its agonies, be transported by its joys, and do this so completely that on the stage the right tone of feeling shall pervade the impersonation, but be all the while held in check by the controlling power of art.

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back holding in one hand a soup-tureen full of smoking *bouillon*, and in the other a *casserole* with spinach. Behold the supper! No plates or spoons, the maid having carried off the keys. Rachel opens the buffet, finds a salad-bowl filled with salad, seizes the wooden spoon, unearths a dish, and begins to eat.

'"But," says mama, "there are pewter plates in the kitchen."

'Off goes Rachel in search of them, brings them, and distributes them to the guests. On which the following dialogue begins, in which you have my assurance that I have not changed one word:

Mama. My dear, the beefsteaks are overdone.

Rachel. Quite true; they are as hard as wood. In the days that I did our house-work I was a better cook than that. Well, it is one talent the less. What would you have? I have lost in one way, gained in another. Sarah, you don't eat.

Sarah. No; I can't eat off a pewter plate.

Rachel. Oh! and so it is since I bought a dozen plated dishes out of my savings that you are too fine to soil your fingers with pewter! If I grow richer, you will soon be wanting one servant behind your chair and another before it. (*Pointing with her fork.*) I will never banish these old plates from our house. They have served us too long. Isn't it so, mama?

Mama (*with her mouth full*). What a child it is!

Rachel (*turning to me*). Just fancy! when I played at the Théâtre Molière, I had only two pairs of stockings, and every morning——

Here Sister Sarah began jabbering in German, to prevent her sister from going on.

Rachel. No German here! There is nothing to be ashamed of. At that time I had but two pairs of stockings, and, to play at night, I had to wash a pair of them every morning. That pair was

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hanging up on a cord in my room whilst I was wearing the others.

I. And you did the house-work?

Rachel. I rose every day at six, and by eight all the beds were made. I then went to market to buy the dinner.

I. And did you take toll upon the purchases? (Faisiez-vous danser l'anse du panier?)

Rachel. No; I was a very honest cook: wasn't I, mama?

Mama (*going on eating*). Oh, that's true.

Rachel. Once only I played the thief for a month. When I bought for four sous, I counted five, and when I paid ten sous, I charged twelve. At the end of a month I found myself at the head of three francs.

I (*severely*). And what did you do with these three francs, mademoiselle?

Mama (*seeing that Rachel was silent*). Monsieur, she bought Molière's works with them.

I. Indeed!

Rachel. Indeed yes! I already had a Corneille and a Racine; a Molière I sorely wanted. I bought it with my three francs, and then I confessed my crimes.'

This kind of talk bored the majority of the guests, and three-fourths of them got up and left. De Musset continues:

'The servant returns, bringing the rings and bracelets. They were laid upon the table. The two bracelets are magnificent—worth at least four or five thousand francs. They are accompanied by a crown in gold, and of great value. The whole lie higgledy-piggledy on the table with the salad, the spinach, and the pewter plates. Meanwhile,

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struck with the idea of the housemaid's work, of the kitchen, of the beds to make, and the toils of the needy life, I fix my eyes upon Rachel's hands, rather fearing to find them ugly or injured. They are delicately small, white, dimpled, and tapering off into fine points—a true princess's hands.

Sarah, who does not eat, continues to grumble in German. . . .

Rachel (*replying to the German growls*). You worry me. I want to talk about my young days.'

Supper ended, Rachel brews a bowl of punch for her guests, amuses herself by setting fire to it; has the candles—much to the horror of the Argus-eyed mama, who obviously had her doubts as to what De Musset might do in the dark—put under the table, so as to heighten the effect of the blue flames; and when they are put back, and the punch distributed, takes the little poignard from De Musset's cane, and uses it for a toothpick.

'Here,' says the poet, 'the common talk and childish pranks come to an end. A single word is enough to change the whole character of the scene, and to bring into this picture poetry and the artistic instinct.

I. How you read the letter to-night! You were greatly moved.

Rachel. Yes. It seemed as if something within me were going to break. But that is nothing. I don't like the piece [Voltaire's "Tancrède"] much. It is artificial.

I. You prefer the plays of Corneille and Racine?

Rachel. I love Corneille dearly, and yet he is

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sometimes trivial, sometimes stilted. There is not the ring of truth in these passages.

I. Oh, gently, mademoiselle!

Rachel. Let us see. When in Horace, for example, Sabine says, "On peut changer d'amant, mais non changer d'époux"; I don't like that. It is coarse.

I. You will admit, at any rate, it is true.

Rachel. Yes; but is it worthy of Corneille? Talk to me of Racine! Him I adore. Everything he says is so beautiful, so true, so noble!

I. Apropos of Racine, do you remember receiving some time ago an anonymous letter, which contained a suggestion about the last scene of "Mithridate"?

Rachel. Perfectly; I followed the advice given, and ever since I have been greatly applauded in this scene. Do you know who it was that wrote to me?

I. I do: it is the woman in all Paris with the largest mind and the smallest foot. [This was a description of Georges Sand, well known in Paris at the time.] What part are you studying just now?

Rachel. This summer we are going to play "Marie Stuart" and then "Polyeucte," and perhaps——

I. Well?

Rachel (*striking the table emphatically*). Well, I want to play Phèdre. They tell me I am too young, too thin, and a thousand other absurdities. But I answer, it is the finest part in Racine. I believe I can play it.

Sarah. Perhaps, dear, you are mistaken.

Rachel. That's my affair. If people say that I am too young, and that the part does not suit me, *parbleau!* they said heaps of things about my play-

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ing Roxane; and what did they all come to? If they say that I am too thin, I maintain this is sheer nonsense. A woman who is possessed by a shameful love, but who dies rather than abandon herself to it; a woman parched up with the fire of passion and the waste of tears,* such a woman cannot have a chest like Madame Paradol. It would be contrary to all nature. I have read the part ten times within the last eight days. How I shall play it I do not know, but I tell you that I feel it. Let the papers say what they please, they shall not change my mind on the subject. They are at their wits' end to find things to annoy me, when they might help and encourage me; but I shall act, if it comes to that, for three people. (*Turning towards me.*) Yes! I have read certain articles that speak out frankly and conscientiously, and I know nothing better, more useful; but there are some people who use their pen to lie, to destroy. They are worse than thieves or assassins. They kill the mind by pin-pricks. Oh, I feel as though I could poison them!

Mama. My dear, you do nothing but talk; you are tiring yourself. This morning you were up by six. I can't imagine what you are made of. You have been chatter-chattering all the day, and played to-night besides. You will make yourself ill.

Rachel (*with vivacity*). No! I tell you, no! All this gives me life. (*Then turning to me.*) Would you like me to fetch the book? We shall read the play together.

I. Would I like it? You could not please me more.

Sarah. But, dear, it is half-past eleven.

* Rachel was thinking of the line, 'J'ai langui, j'ai séché dans les feux, dans les larmes.'

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Rachel. Very well; go to bed. What prevents you?'

Thereupon off goes Sarah to bed. Rachel rises and leaves the room. Presently she returns with the volume of Racine in her hand. Her look and bearing have in them something not to be described —something solemn and devout, like that of an officiating priestess on her way to the altar, bearing the sacred vessels. She seats herself near De Musset, and snuffs the candle. Mama, with a smile on her face, drops off into a doze.

'*Rachel* (*opening the volume with marked respect, and bending over it*). How I love this man! When I put my nose into this book, I would like to stay there two days without drinking or eating.

'Rachel and I began to read the "Phèdre," with the book placed on the table between us. All the guests go away. Rachel, with a slight nod, salutes them one by one as they leave, and goes on reading. At first she recites in a kind of monotone, as if it were a litany. By degrees she kindles. We exchange our remarks, our ideas, on each passage. At length she comes to the declaration.* She stretches out her right arm upon the table; with her forehead resting upon her left hand, which is supported on her elbow, she gives full vent to her emotion. Nevertheless she only speaks in a suppressed voice. All at once her eyes sparkle— the genius of Racine illuminates her face; she grows pale, then red. Never did I behold anything

* That is, the fine scene, Act II., Scene 5, in which Phèdre makes confession to Hippolytus of her love for him.

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so beautiful, so interesting; never, on the stage, has she produced such an effect upon me.

'The fatigue, a little hoarseness, the punch, the lateness of the hour, an animation almost feverish on her small, girlish cheeks, encircled by the night-cap, a strange, unwonted charm diffused over her whole being, those brilliant eyes that read my soul, a childlike smile, which finds the means of insinuating itself through all that passes; add to this, the table in disorder, the candle with its flickering flame, the mother dozing beside us—all this composes at once a picture worthy of Rembrandt, a chapter of romance worthy of "Wilhelm Meister," and a souvenir of the artist's life which shall never fade out of my memory.

'This went on till half-past twelve, when her father returned from the opera, where he had been to see Mdlle. Judith make her first appearance in "La Juive." No sooner is he seated than he addresses to his daughter two or three words of the most churlish kind, ordering her to cease reading. Rachel closes the volume, saying, "Disgusting! I shall buy a matchbox, and read in my bed alone." I looked at her; great tears were standing in her eyes.

'It was indeed disgusting to see such a creature treated thus. I rose and took my leave, filled with admiration, with respect for her, and profound sympathy.'

Years were to elapse and the young actress to rise to the height of her fame, before she realized her dream of impersonating Phèdre. We see from De Musset's narrative how early it had taken possession of her mind. She had often dwelt upon the subject with her friend, M. Crémieux, who had again and again dissuaded her from the attempt,

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telling her she was too young and could not understand the character. One morning she arrived at his study in the highest spirits. 'I know the part of Phèdre now; shall I repeat it to you?' she said. Crémieux heard her, but felt sure when she had finished that she could do much better. 'Do you know,' he asked, 'the story of this Phèdre, so guilty and so unhappy? When you say,

'"Ariane, ma sœur, de quel amour blessée
Vous mourûtes aux bords où vous fûtes laissée!"

have you present to your mind the woeful destiny of Ariane? Do you know into what shameful excesses the fatal wrath of Venus plunged your mother? In a word, have they taught you the legend of that woeful race, of which you die "la dernière et la plus misérable"?' 'No!' replied Rachel; 'pray tell it me, dear Papa Crémieux.' To refuse was impossible; but how was such a story to be told to ears which Crémieux believed to be chaste and pure? He managed to get over the task with what delicacy he could. His pupil saw at a glance the bearing of the tragic story. 'Now,' she said, when he had done, 'would you like me to recite my part again?' She did so, and seemed to be transformed into that victim of a guilty passion inspired by the 'haine de Venus,' which she was destined soon after to make a living reality, which those who had the good fortune to see it could never forget.* But it was

* 'Autographes: Collection Adolphe Crémieux,' p. 141.

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well for her reputation that her appearance in the character was delayed until her powers were fully matured, and she was able to present it to the world as her masterpiece.

Meanwhile the public of Paris were content to see her again and again in the parts in which she had first won their regards, with the addition of a few others—such as Esther (Racine), Laodice in 'Nicomède' (Corneille), Pauline in 'Polyeucte' (Corneille)—from the old classical pieces, which had so recently been thought to have completely lost their hold upon the stage.

The favourite of the theatre became also the favourite of the saloons, and the doors of the most exclusive houses, even of the Quartier St. Germain, were thrown open to her. At none was she more welcome than at that of Madame Recamier, where she held her own with distinction amid the brilliant circle which clustered round that fascinating woman. What Rachel was then, Madame Lenormand describes in her 'Memoirs of Madame Recamier,' with an accuracy for which those who met her in society at this period can vouch.

'Whoever,' she writes, 'has not heard and seen Mdlle. Rachel in a salon can have only an incomplete idea of her feminine attractions, and of her talent as an actress. Her features, a little too delicate for the stage, gained much by being seen nearer. Her voice was a little hard, but her accent was enchanting, and she modulated it to suit the limits of a salon with marvellous instinct. Her

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deportment was in irreproachable taste; and the ease and promptitude with which this young girl, without education or knowledge of good society, seized its manner and tone, was certainly the perfection of art. Deferential with dignity, modest, natural, and easy, she talked interestingly of her art and her studies. Her success in society was immense.'

What wonder! In the poetical world in which her imagination was then and had for years been working she had lived in the society in which the simplicity, earnestness, courtesy, and absence of self-assertion that go to produce distinction of manner are best learned.

It was well known from what a stock she had sprung, how sordid were the habits and tastes of her parents, how little she could possibly have seen of the refinements which are the common possession of good society. To find her what Madame Lenormand describes her to have been, while it created general surprise, added immensely to the fascination under which her triumphs on the stage had already placed men and women of the highest culture, as well as the leaders in literature and art, by whom her society was eagerly sought. She had an air of perfect breeding, simple, unpretentious, refined, holding her own in circles where the play of wit and the address and sparkle of good conversation were most conspicuous. But, sought after as she was, it was difficult to conceal the defects of orthography which the answers that had to be

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written to the numerous letters she received would have betrayed. In this dilemma her friend M. Crémieux came to her aid, and supplied her with the drafts of nearly all the letters which she had to write. Often, writes his biographer, people said to him, 'What an extraordinary creature is this Rachel! Not satisfied with being the first tragic actress of the age, she writes like Madame de Sévigné. Look at this charming letter I have just received from her.' And Crémieux read, without remark, a letter, every word of which he had already the best of all reasons for knowing. At the same time it must be said that, however they might fail in orthography or syntax, Rachel's letters to her friend, of which his editor gives specimens, are charming in feeling and clever to a degree, and give promise of the admirable letter-writer which she afterwards became.

The echo of Rachel's fame, confirmed as it was by the great cities of France, in the course of successful but most exhausting tours in 1840, greatly excited public curiosity on this side of the Channel; and when she appeared at Her Majesty's Theatre in May, 1841, she was received with a warmth for which she was not prepared. In a letter quoted in M. d'Heylli's volume (May 17, 1841) she writes:

'Here I am in London — my success most brilliant—for everybody says they never witnessed anything to equal it. I made my first appearance

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as Hermione in "Andromaque," and I assure you that, when I went upon the stage, my feet shook under me, and I believe I should have dropped down with fright, had not a tremendous volley of applause come to sustain me, and to rouse me to fuller consciousness of all it behoved me to do to merit this reception, which was mere kindness, and nothing but kindness, since they had not yet heard me. The bravos and plaudits accompanied me to the close of my part, and then I was recalled. Hats and handkerchiefs waved from the boxes, and a number of bouquets fell at my feet. A magnificent engagement has just been offered me for next season.'*

A few days further on (May 31) she writes

* The company which Rachel brought with her to England was a very weak one. She says of it, on recounting to M. Crémieux the success of her first appearance, 'Mon entourage n'a été que pour me mieux faire ressortir.' This was to the last what she liked. One day, when M. Crémieux expressed regret not to have seen her play with Talma, she exclaimed, 'I am heartily glad he did not live till my time!' Her English troupe on her first visit were obviously of a low type, not presentable to her English visitors. She writes to M. Crémieux that she took care 'never to have them with her till about nine in the evening, too late to be broken in upon by gentlefolks' (*loc. supra cit.*, p. 167). It was no doubt one of this vulgar troupe who had the bad taste to tell a story of her which has often been repeated to her disadvantage. She had returned from the palace, where the Duchess of Kent, the night being cold, had with her own hands placed a handsome Cashmere shawl on Rachel's shoulders. Throwing it down upon a couch, she exclaimed gaily, 'Oh, mes amis, que j'ai besoin de m'éncanailler!' After some hours of the icy restraint of a Court circle the phrase must not be judged too severely.

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to the same friend: 'The English journalists say quantities of fine things about me, and all unsolicited "sans cartes de visite." On Wednesday I am engaged to the Queen (Dowager) at Marlborough House. All the Court will be there! I am so frightened!' All was not sunshine, however. A bad attack of illness interrupted her performances, and she was surrounded exclusively by strangers. Her sister Sarah came over from Paris. 'Ah,' Rachel writes (June 15), 'how glad I am I made her come to London! I was so sad far away from all those I love, and without the power even of speaking of them! I assure you this contributed greatly to my eight days' illness.'

In the same letter she speaks of her triumphant success in Marie Stuart, which was certainly not one of her best parts. 'Ten bouquets and two chaplets fell at my feet with thunders of applause. The receipts mounted to 30,000 francs (£1,200) and a few guineas. . . . 13,000 (£520) were sent to me next morning. I am content.'

In England Rachel was received in the best society with no less cordiality than she had been in Paris. She still bore an umblemished reputation as a woman, without which in those days her admission into good society would have been impossible.*

* Our fine ladies had not as yet been so completely educated out of the simplest rules of propriety as not to be startled by the announcement of an actress ushered into their drawing-room as 'Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt et son fils.'

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The houses of the leading nobility were opened to her. The Dowager-Queen Adelaide paid her marked attention. She performed at Windsor Castle, and was presented by the Duchess of Kent to the Queen, from whom she received a handsome bracelet, with the inscription, 'Victoria Reine à Mademoiselle Rachel.'*

The parts in which she appeared were not of a kind to endear her to our English tastes, for they had in them little of the womanly tenderness and charm which Shakespeare has led us to look for in our dramatic heroines, and for which neither her voice nor powers of expression were well suited. But these were of a kind that penetrated even when they pained; for not in our time had been seen such thrilling delineations of the passions enumerated by Mrs. Fanny Kemble as 'the haunt and main region' of Rachel's genius — 'scorn, hatred, revenge, vitriolic irony, concentrated rage, seething jealousy, and a fierce love, which seems in its excess allied to all the evil which sometimes

* On receiving Her Majesty's invitation to Windsor Castle, Rachel was delighted. But some of the people about the Court told her that it would be proper for her to write to the Queen the next day after her soirée there. 'Mon cher Monsieur Crémieux,' she writes to her friend, 'vous voyez que, malgré les grands progrès que je fais dans le style, il me faudra cette fois encore avoir recours à vos complaisances eternelles'—an appeal not made in vain. In a letter to M. Crémieux, Rachel gives a spirited account of the evening at Windsor Castle.

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springs from that bitter-sweet root.' Her fine though somewhat peculiar voice was especially fitted for the expression of these emotions. Mrs. Kemble says of it, it was 'the deepest and most sonorous' she ever heard from woman's lips. 'It wants,' she adds, 'brilliancy, variety, tenderness, but it is like a fine, deep-toned bell.' And it was managed with a consummate skill, which turned its natural advantages to the fullest account.

The English critics complained of the want of the more attractive feminine qualities in Rachel's performances. It was a want which no actress—no young one at least—would be willing to own; and in the hope of disproving the charge, Rachel, in the following year, essayed the character of Chimène in Corneille's 'Cid,' and of Ariane in the same author's tragedy of that name. But these impersonations only confirmed the judgments of those of her critics, in Paris as well as in London, who denied to her the power of touching 'the sacred source of sympathetic tears.' Still, within her own peculiar province she stood alone; and when she returned to England in 1842, she established that supremacy even more firmly by an obvious improvement not merely in physical power, but also in the resources of her art. Not the least in Rachel's estimation of the trophies which she carried away from this visit was a letter from the Duke of Wellington, assuring her of his great anxiety to be present at her benefit, for which he

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had secured a box, which he will not fail to occupy '*si il* lui devient possible'—the French, it will be observed, is rather of the 'Frenche atte Bowe' kind—'de s'absenter ce jour là de l'assemblée du Parlement dont il est membre. Il regrettera beaucoup *si il* le trouve impossible ainsi d'avoir la satisfaction de la voir et l'entendre encore une fois avant son départ de Londres.'

The enthusiasm of Paris and London was, if possible, surpassed by that of the principal cities of France and Belgium. Some of Rachel's letters from Rouen, Bordeaux, and Marseilles, quoted in M. d'Heylli's volume, give a vivid picture of the heavy cost to the strength and to the emotions of the young artist by which her successes in the provinces were purchased, at the time when she ought to have been seeking repose. Thus, on June 11, 1840, she writes from Rouen to a friend: 'True, I have success, but not one friend. Here I never stir out. I write all day long; 'tis my only distraction. It seems to me death were preferable to this life, which I drag along as a convict drags his chain.' Everywhere the fatigue had to be encountered of receiving all sorts of admirers, who quite forgot to consider whether their compliments compensated for the inroads they made upon the artist's hours of study and repose. 'I am interrupted every minute,' she writes from Bordeaux (August 4, 1841) to Jules Janin, 'by people who constantly ply me with the same phrases, and this

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without ever altering a syllable.' The odes and sonnets from young poets, which rained upon her, provoked more of her mirth than of her sympathy. 'To-day,' she writes a few days later, 'I received another set of verses from a young *avocat;* people are warm in the South, and declarations abound. These amuse me, when they are written; but, *par bouche*, my tragic air comes in to my assistance, and I make short work of them.' In the midst of all these distractions Rachel reads and studies, and dreams of the new part of Judith, on which Madame de Girardin is at work for her.* But the strain was too heavy, and on August 19, 1841, we find her writing from Bordeaux: 'Sooth to say, I know not if I can live long in this way. I am exhausted, sad, and were I to write longer I should weep hot tears.' Rachel was still under age, and at the disposal of her parents. They seem to have taken no account of her fatigue. The receipts she brought in were superb. What more, to their way of thinking, could their gifted daughter desire?

Deeply and fatally as Rachel became infected in after-years with the same greed of gain, it is obvious from her letters that in these early years it had not deadened in her the instincts of the artist. When

* It was produced in April, 1843, but played only nine times. Even if it had been a stronger play than it was, it had no chance in competition with the 'Phèdre,' in which Rachel had recently appeared, and about which all Paris was in ecstasy.

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playing in Marseilles in June, 1848, she read her audience a lesson which our English audiences would be all the better of having occasionally read to them. Writing to Madame de Girardin, she says:

'Let me tell you of a little stroke of audacity, which fills me with alarm when I recall it in cold blood. In the middle of one of the most stirring scenes of "Bajazet" someone took it into his head to throw me a wreath, to which I paid no heed, desiring to keep in the part ("rester en situation"), while the audience shouted, "The wreath! the wreath!" Atalide, thinking more of the audience than her part, picked up the wreath and presented it to me. Indignant at a barbarous interruption of this kind, truly worthy of an opera audience, I seized the unlucky wreath with indignation, and, flinging it on one side, went on with Roxane. Fortune loves the bold. Never was there a stronger proof of this axiom, for this movement of unstudied impulse was hailed with three salvoes of applause.'

So, again, when writing to her young brother, Raphael Félix, from Lyons (July 7, 1848), her words of excellent advice show that her heart still burned with the enthusiastic reverence for her art, from which she drew her inspiration, and by which Alfred de Musset had been so deeply fascinated.

'Now, my dear brother,' she writes, 'tell me something of your pursuits, your plans for the future, for it is time you were up and doing. You will soon be a man, and you ought to know "Que

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l'habit ne fait pas le moine." If, as I foresee, your inclinations carry you towards the stage, try at least to look upon the actor's vocation as an art; treat it as a matter of conscience, not as something merely to make a position for you—as one does with a girl, who is married off when she leaves a convent in order that she may have the right to dance at a ball six times instead of three—but rather out of love, out of passion for those works which feed the mind and which guide the heart. . . .

'It is possible for a woman to attain an honourable position, where she is esteemed and respected, without very possibly having that polish which the world rightly calls education. Why? you will ask me. It is because a woman does not lose her charm, but the reverse,' by maintaining a great reserve in her language and demeanour. A woman answers questions, she does not ask them; she never initiates a discussion, she listens. Her natural coquettishness makes her long for information; she retains what she learns, and, without having a solid foundation, she thus acquires that superficial culture which may upon occasion pass for real culture. But a man! what a difference! All that the woman cannot know the man should have at his finger-ends; he has occasion for it every day of his life; it is a resource with which he augments his pleasures, diminishes his pains, gives variety to his enjoyment, aud which, moreover, makes him be regarded as "un homme d'esprit." Think of this, and if the early days seem to you somewhat hard, then reflect that you have a sister who will feel pride and pleasure in your success, and who will cherish you with all her soul. I venture to hope that this letter will not have appeared to you too long to read, but, on the contrary, that you will

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often find time to re-read it, and if not often, why, then, at least every now and then.'

It is in this and other letters to her family that Rachel as a woman shows at her best. There is abundance of good sense, of sprightliness and of *esprit* in her other letters, but in these she lets us see that she has a heart. Love of kindred is no uncommon phenomenon even in the most selfish, and it certainly does not deserve a place among the higher virtues. But where a life is in all other ways tainted with selfishness, we hail this as a saving grace, and are fain to think that under happier conditions it might have blossomed into qualities of a more generous strain.

A strange family they must have been, vulgar, quarrelsome, incapable of profiting by the opportunities of a more refined life which Rachel's success had opened to them. In a letter in the writer's collection from Rachel to her sister Sarah, about the year 1848—Rachel had the bad habit of very rarely putting the date to her letters—one sees how much disquietude their habits caused her.

'Papa,' she writes, 'has just received a letter from Rebecca, telling him of a scene that has taken place between you, her mother, and herself. My dear Sarah, it is high time you should change your character, for Rebecca is no longer a child, and, for her age, let me tell you, not inferior to you in any respect. Doubtless I do wrong to meddle in all these quarrels, but the fact is, I have not the sangfroid to be indifferent to them, and I am humiliated by

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seeing my family behaving to each other in a way that makes me ask if God was not mistaken in pulling us out of the mire in which we lived before I entered the dramatic career. Neither the one nor the other of you are worthy of the good fortune Heaven has showered upon you these last ten years. It is shameful that the whole family is not more grateful. In words they are more than generous, in act they are ungrateful in the extreme. There are no two families with less heart than ours. The Halle is not more filthy than your tongues. My poor Sarah, learn to appreciate your position better. . . . The advice I give you is that of a sincere friend. In life, when one needs the aid of others, it is necessary to make concessions, or at least not to repay them with insult.'

Her father's name rarely appears in Rachel's letters; but both to and of her mother she always speaks with the filial devotion of her race.* She was warmly attached, not only to her brother, but also to her four sisters, all of whom had their way to success upon the stage paved by her;† but

* In a letter to her mother, written June 9, 1857, a few months before her death, Rachel says very charmingly: 'On ne remercie pas une mère des ennuis, des fatigues qu'on lui cause; on l'aime, et jamais on ne s'acquitte vers elle . . . et voilà!' Both father and mother survived her, the former dying in 1872, the latter in 1873.

† Sarah, the eldest and least capable as an actress, left the stage, and made a fortune by the sale of the *Eau de Fées*, which still keeps its place on many toilet-tables. She died at Paris in 1877. Dinah and Lia Félix survived her, and the latter, we believe, appeared for a time upon the stage of the Comédie Française.

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Rebecca, the youngest and most gifted, was her especial favourite. Over her she watched with a mother-like care; and when the young girl was taken from her by early death in 1854, just as she had begun to give promise of becoming an ornament to the stage,* the blow struck home. Thus, when urged, after she was herself fatally touched by the same malady, consumption, to go for her health to Eaux Bonnes in 1856, Rachel wrote, 'I should never regain my health there, where I saw my poor darling sister Rebecca die.' And within a few hours of her own death she found comfort in the thought of their reunion. 'Ma pauvre Rebecca,' she exclaimed, 'ma chère sœur, je vais te revoir! Que je suis heureuse!'

From the glimpses which have been furnished to us of the home in which Rachel was reared, there could have been in it little to refine or elevate the

* Great hopes that Rebecca would equal her sister upon the stage were at one time entertained. In a letter (December 30, 1845) now before me from a friend, who had been most helpful in introducing Rachel to the best society in Paris, he writes: 'Poor Rachel is very languishing, and, perhaps, dying. Her method of life is so contrary to the necessities of her health! I have not seen her since two or three years. I pity her so sincerely! Such fine endowments! Such remarkable qualities! Alas! Alas! Alas! Her young sister Rebecca played the other day in my salon with an incredible talent. Some of the distinguished spectators thought that she is even superior to Rachel. That she is, no! That she will be, I am disposed to believe it. God grant her to have another life than her sister!'

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moral nature. There is a charming passage in Rabelais, where, borrowing from Lucian, he makes Cupid tell his mother, Venus, that those who were wedded to the Muses were so absorbed in their noble pursuit, that he unbandaged his eyes, and laid down his quiver, and, in very reverence for their high and pure natures, sought not to infect them with the sweet poison of his shafts. The apologue sprang from a juster and nobler appreciation of the qualities of the true artist, than the modern belief that to indulge the sensuous appetites and passions is a characteristic and a necessity of the artistic temperament. In the early days of her triumphs, Rachel's heart seems to have been kept pure amid many temptations by 'the holy forms of young imagination,' and, had they continued to be cherished there, her career would have gone on brightening to the close. But it proved not to be of the kind which the Cupid of the fable spares. To her infinite loss, she gave the jewel of her honour to a man who, when she found him worthless and discarded him, took the incredibly base revenge of making her weakness known to the world by publishing her letters to himself.*

* When the rumours of this scandal first got abroad the Crémieux refused to believe them, and Rachel protested to them her innocence. Details were made public. On this Madame Crémieux then wrote to her. 'Rachel,' ran her words, 'my dear child, if our prayers have any power over you, answer me, and say that you will do what we ask of you. You would not desire to be in Paris and in London merely

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Straightway society turned its back upon the erring sister whom it had believed to be spotless; and she, made reckless apparently by what had happened, was at no pains to retrieve her damaged reputation. Her 'tragic air' no longer kept suitors at bay, and she became twice a mother of sons: first in 1844, and again in 1848—Count Walewski claiming, and being accorded, the honours of paternity in the first case; while in the second the boy received only his mother's name. Rachel, the great *tragédienne*, still reigned supreme on the stage of the Comédie Française, but she was no more seen in the salons, where to be admitted was an honour; and good men there, who had admired her genius and the charm of her manner in her early days, spoke of her with a sigh as 'Pauvre Rachel!'

No cloud had as yet overshadowed her personal

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the woman people go to see as actress because of her superior talent, you who up to this moment have been the child so pure and charming, whom Queens and personages of the highest station were delighted to summon to their salons and palaces; you would not wish that young girls should shun you, you from whom young girls of the highest distinction asked, and gave to you in return, the title of sister. . . . I prefer writing to you myself to trusting to the pen of my husband. He is confounded; he was far from giving heed to this general outcry. On Monday, at one, he will call for your answer. May it permit us to declare publicly that you are always, as we know you are, the Rachel whom we love with all the tenderness of our hearts!' A servant was sent for the answer, and was told by Rachel that there was none.

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character when, on January 24, 1843, she made her first appearance as Phèdre. The character, like Juliet on our stage, has always been regarded in France as the touchstone of an actress's tragic powers. Champmeslé, Adrienne Lecouvreur, Dumesnil, Clairon, Raucourt, Georges, Duchesnois, all regarded it as trying their skill to the uttermost; and Clairon, who alone of them all was able not only to act but to write well, says of herself in it: 'I am forced to admit that, even when I spoke and acted my best, I always fell far short both of the author and of my own ideal.' How true was young Rachel's conception of the part is apparent from De Musset's description. But in having M. Samson's guidance in this, as in her other most important characters, she was peculiarly fortunate, for he had heard Talma read it at the Conservatoire.

'I see him,' he writes ('Mémoires,' p. 79), 'I hear him still. Destitute of all the means of illusion, without theatrical costume, a chair between his legs and an eye-glass in his hand, he was as tragic as upon the stage, and made us thrill as he spoke to us the verses of Andromaque or of Phèdre. In the declaration of Phèdre to Hippolytus, I hear the rising passion of his tones, as he delivered the words, "Mais fidèle, mais fier, et même un peu farouche." The way also in which he said, "Cette noble pudeur colorait son visage," made the line stand vividly out, and gave it a grace not to be expressed. "No straining for effect! Let not a trace of anything of the kind be seen!"

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he said to a Phèdre of his class who did not appear to comprehend him. "Bear in mind that Phèdre, who has been consumed for a long period by her passion, has passed three days without food and three nights without sleep. Does not Œnone say to her:

> 'Les ombres par trois fois ont obscurci les cieux,
> Depuis que le sommeil est entré dans vos yeux,
> Et le jour a trois fois chassé la nuit obscure,
> Depuis que votre corps languit sans nourriture'?

"Phèdre's life is the fever that burns her up and the dream that haunts her: she is not on the earth, she is in the clouds," and the voice of the great professor grew muffled, like his look, as he made the wife of Theseus speak.'

To an artist of Rachel's intelligence, a record such as this, enforced by voice and action as M. Samson would enforce it, must have been of priceless value. Those who saw her play Phèdre in her best days—for it lost much of its weird charm in the latter part of her career—will remember the same shrinking look and the same muffled voice throughout the avowal of her love for Hippolytus, which so impressed her master in Talma's reading. But, indeed, the whole performance, from her entrance upon the scene up to her death at the close, was a thing never to be forgotten. There was something appallingly true and terribly beautiful in this woman wasting away by inches in the consuming fires of a passion which she abhorred, but which Venus herself was fanning in her veins with

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pitiless persistency. It was real as life itself, but it was reality steeped in the hues of poetry. The outlines of the conception were broad and large; but every word, every look, every movement, had a specific value.

Not all at once, however, did this fine impersonation reach this pitch of excellence. Rachel, on the night she played it first, lost her nerve, as she had done on her début as Roxane. Her performance was without inspiration, and the audience saw in her only the skilful artist, who had calculated her effects with care, but who left their hearts and sympathies untouched. Nevertheless, the ideal was clear in her mind. Nor did she rest until she had found the true means of expressing it. Each time she played the part she grew nearer its embodiment, till in about two years it became, what many like ourselves must remember it, all that Racine himself could have desired.* To this hour it stands out in solitary splendour; for the attempts of Ristori and of Sarah Bernhardt in the part are unworthy to be named in the same breath. They only served to mark how wide is the difference between the merely picturesque and practised actress, and her in whom the intuitions of genius are disciplined and fortified by the resources of art. The same contrast was no less apparent between the Adrienne

* In 1845 she writes to M. Samson: 'I have been giving a deal of study to Phèdre. I will call to-morrow to ask you what my profound researches have come to.'

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Lecouvreur of these ladies and the Adrienne Lecouvreur of Rachel. M. Legouré, one of the authors of the piece, in his 'Memoirs' records an incident in the first rehearsal of the fifth act that furnishes a glimpse of the intensity of feeling which gave Rachel such a power over the hearts of her audience. They had been rehearsing the previous acts till midnight. Most of the actors had left the theatre, and the stage was illuminated only by the dim light of a small lamp near the prompter's box. 'We are monarchs,' Rachel suddenly exclaimed, 'of all we survey. Suppose we try the fifth act, which we have not yet rehearsed.' This was done, and when the rehearsal was over Rachel said not a word, but sat down, wiping tears on tears from her eyes.

'I went up to her,' says Legouvé, 'and in the guise of praise pointed to the perturbed faces of her fellow-actors. "My dear Mdlle. Rachel," I said, taking her hand, "you played that fifth act as you will never play it again." "I think so too," she replied, "and do you know why?" "Yes; because there was nobody there to applaud you; because you did not give a moment's thought to the effect; because for the time being you were poor Adrienne herself, dying in the middle of the night in the arms of her two friends." She remained silent for a moment, then said, "You are altogether mistaken. A much stranger phenomenon took hold of my mind. A nameless something told me all at once that I, like Adrienne, should die young. I seemed to be in my own room

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breathing my last. I was watching my own death-bed. When I uttered the words, 'Farewell, ye triumphs of the stage. Farewell, ye delights of the art I have loved so well,' I was shedding real tears. It was because I was thinking with despair, that time would efface all traces of what was my talent once, and that soon there would remain nothing of her who was once Rachel!" '

Her acting of that scene had in it a depth of pathos that was never to be forgotten. It would have moved a heart of stone. In 1849, when it was reproduced in England, Rachel's power had visibly declined; yet her treatment of this striking but painful character furnished a standard by which to measure the capabilities of those who ventured to enter into competition with her, that told severely against them.

Of the plays written for Rachel—fifteen in all—'Adrienne Lecouvreur' alone has kept the stage. The others, either from being poor in themselves, or affording little scope for her peculiar qualities, lived for but a few nights. To this the 'Lady Tartufe' of Madame de Girardin is scarcely an exception. The Madame de Blossac of Rachel alone saved this unpleasant play; and yet it was not until the fifth act that it afforded any scope for the display of her best powers. It was performed for thirty-five nights; but the fact that it had no vitality beyond what Rachel gave it was made apparent when it was revived in 1857 at the Comédie Française, with Madame Plessy in the

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part. For although that most attractive actress brought to the performance all the charms of a beautiful person and a most refined talent, the play was performed to empty benches, and for only six times. Two graceful little pieces—Armand Barthet's 'Le Moineau de Lesbie,' and the 'Horace et Lydie' of Ponsard—which Rachel made peculiarly her own by exquisite grace of manner and subtle beauty of utterance, long continued to survive in the recollections of Parisian playgoers. But they are well content to forget her Thisbe in Victor Hugo's 'Angelo,' her Messalina and Lisiska in Maquet and J. Lacroy's detestable 'Valéria,' and other parts wholly unworthy of her powers, which she made the mistake of accepting.

Rachel had the idea that she could play comedy, and even hankered, it seems, after the parts known on the stage as *soubrettes*. The opinion was not shared by M. Samson or her best critics; and although she played Molière's Celimène in England and elsewhere, they prevented her from perilling her reputation by doing so in Paris. She was not by any means the only eminent tragic actress who has failed in comedy. Mrs. Siddons' Rosalind was at once commonplace and lachrymose; and Miss O'Neill's Lady Teazle so lacked breeding, that, although she was then in the height of her reputation, she was not allowed to repeat it. The woman as she is in herself, pure and good, humorous and refined, or the reverse, as it may be, speaks out in

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comedy. If she be wanting in essential ladyhood, the flaw is sure to make itself felt. It was felt in Rachel's performances, where the incidents and passions of the scene came near ordinary life, and seemed to bring to the surface the hard and *tant soit peu* Bohemian elements of her nature. The free play of movement, the flexibility, the agile grace, the playfulness veiling depth of feeling, which make the charm of comedy, were not within her command. She measured her own strength perfectly when, writing to M. Legouvé, to explain why she would not act his Medea, she said:

'I see the part is full of rapid and violent movements; I have to rush to my children, I have to lift them up, to carry them off the stage, to contend for them with the people. This external vivacity is not my style. Whatever may be expressed by physiognomy, by attitude, by sober and measured gesture—that I can command; but where broad and energetic pantomime begins, there my executive talent stops.'

Rachel, as an artist, stood at her best between the years 1843 and 1847. From that time she sensibly fell off, and the reason of her doing so is obvious. She had set her mind more upon the improvement of her fortune than of her skill as the interpreter of the great dramatists of her country Her physical strength, never great, was lavishly expended on engagements in all quarters where money was to be picked up, and where she went

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on reiterating the same parts until they lost all freshness for herself, and, as a consequence, that charm of spontaneousness and truth which they had once possessed. It was in vain that wise friends like Samson and Jules Janin warned her against the ruin she was causing to her talent and to her health. The simple, self-centred life, which they urged her to cultivate, of the true artist, to whom the consciousness of clearer perceptions and of finer execution, developed by earnest study, brings 'riches fineless,' was abandoned for the excitement of lucrative engagements constantly renewed, and of new circles of admirers serving up the incense of adulation in stimulating profusion.

To this there could be but one end, and that a sad one. The strain upon the emotions of a great tragic actress, under the most favourable conditions, is enough to tax the soundest constitution. She must 'spurn delights and live laborious days' if she is to maintain her hold upon an inexorable public, who always expect to see her at her best. As Rachel herself says in writing to Madame de Girardin (May 2, 1851), 'On ne mange pas toujours quand on veut, lors-qu'on a l'honneur d'être la première tragédienne de sa majesté le peuple français.' Long seasons of rest for both body and spirit could alone have enabled her to be true to her own genius. These Rachel would not take until too late. Thus we find her in 1849, during

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three months that should have been given to repose, playing in no fewer than thirty-five towns from one end of France to the other, and giving seventy performances in the course of ninety days. 'Quelle route,' she writes, 'quelle fatigue, mais aussi quelle dot!' The day was not far off when she was doomed to feel in bitterness of heart how dearly this 'dot' was purchased.

The temptation of wealth which her European fame brought her was no doubt great. The sums she received in England, Belgium, Holland, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, were enormous, and the adulation everywhere paid to her might have made the steadiest head giddy. At the staid Court of Berlin she was received in 1853 with courtly honours. The Emperor Nicholas of Russia approached her, after a private performance at Potsdam, with all the chivalrous gallantry which sate so gracefully upon him; and when she offered to rise as he accosted her, took her by both hands and pressed her to remain seated, saying as he did so, 'Asseyez vous, mademoiselle; les royautés comme la mienne passent, la royauté d'art ne passe pas.' And when, in the following year, she went to Russia for six months, she not only brought back £12,000 as the solid gains of her visit, but such recollections of courtly homage paid to her as she describes with admirable vivacity in the following letter from St. Petersburg to her sister Sarah:

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'Yesterday evening your humble servant was entertained like a queen—not a sham tragedy queen, with a crown of gilded pasteboard, but a real queen, duly stamped at the royal mint. First of all, realize to yourself the fact that here the Boyards all follow me, stare at me as if I were some strange animal, and that I cannot move a step without having them after me. In the street, in the shops, wherever I go, or may be caught a glimpse of, I am marked and pointed at. I no longer belong to myself.

'To sum up all, the other day I was invited to a banquet, given in my honour at the Imperial Palace—a fact, oh daughter of papa and mamma Félix. It came off yesterday. What a regale! When I reached the palace, lo, there were gorgeous footmen, all powder and gold lace, just as in Paris, to wait upon and escort me: one takes my pelisse, another goes before and announces me, and I find myself in a saloon gilded from floor to ceiling, with everybody rushing to salute me. It is a grand duke —no less—the Emperor's brother, who advances to offer me his hand to conduct me to the dinner-table —an immense table, raised upon a sort of daïs, but not laid out for many—only thirty covers. But the guests, how select! The Imperial Family, the grand dukes, the little dukes, and the archdukes—all the dukes, in short, of all calibres; and all this tra-la-la of princes and princesses, curious and attentive, devouring me with their eyes, watching my slightest movements, my words, my smiles—in a word, never keeping their eyes off me. Well, do not imagine that I was in any way embarrassed. Not the least in the world! I felt just as usual—at least, up to the middle of the repast, which, moreover, was excellent. But everybody seemed to be much more occupied with me than with the

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viands. At that point the toasts in my honour begin, and very strange indeed is the spectacle which ensues. The young archdukes, to get a better view of me, quit their seats, mount upon the chairs, and even put their feet upon the table—I was about to say into the plates!—and yet nobody seemed the least surprised, there being obviously some traces of the savage still even in the princes of this country! And then the shouts, the deafening bravos, and the calls upon me to recite something. To reply to toasts by a tragic tirade was indeed strange, but I was equal to the occasion. I rose, and, pushing back my chair, assumed the most tragic air of my *répertoire*, and treated them to Phèdre's great scene. Straightway a deathlike silence; you might have heard the flutter of a fly, if there be such a thing in this country. They all listened devoutly, bending towards me, and confining themselves to admiring gestures and stifled murmurs. Then, when I had finished, there was a fresh outbreak of shouts of bravos, of clinking glasses, and fresh toasts, carried so far that for the moment I felt bewildered. Soon, however, I, too, caught the infection, and, excited at once by the odour of the wine and of the flowers and of all this enthusiasm, which had the effect of tickling what little pride I have, I rose again and began to sing, or rather declaimed, the Russian national hymn with no small fervour. On this it was no longer enthusiasm, but utter frenzy; they crowded round me, they pressed my hands, they showered thanks upon me; I was the greatest tragedian in the world, and of all time past and future—and so on for a good quarter of an hour.

'But the best things have an end, and the hour came for me to take my leave. I effected this with the same queenly dignity as I had managed

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my arrival, reconducted even to the grand staircase by the same grand duke, who was very gallant, but maintained at the same time all ceremonious respect. Then appeared the gorgeous footmen in powder, one of them carrying my pelisse. I put it on, and was escorted by them to my carriage, which was surrounded by other footmen carrying torches to illuminate my departure.'

Triumphant, however, as in one point of view was Rachel's visit to Russia, it had its heavy drawbacks. She returned to Paris more shaken than ever in health, and the failure in vigour was quickly perceived when she resumed her place upon the stage there. The public, moreover, were out of humour with her for having forsaken them so long —she had been away a year—and they marked their displeasure by leaving her to play to comparatively empty houses. A new piece, 'Rosemonde,' in which she sustained the principal part, was coldly received, and an epigram of the day tells the tale both of her broken health and of the eclipse of her popularity:

'Pourquoi donc nomme-t-on ce drame Rosemonde?
Je n'y vois plus de rose et n'y vois pas de monde.'

The 'Czarine,' written for her by Scribe—the last of the characters created, as the phrase is, by Rachel — in the following year, was not more successful. The wrong she had done to her body and to her great natural gifts was now to be

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avenged. 'Glory,' she writes to a friend even in 1854, 'is very pleasant, but its value is greatly lowered in my eyes, since I have been made to pay so dearly for it.' Years before she had been warned. In 1847 she had written, 'I have had great success, but how? At the expense of my health, of my life! This intoxication with which an admiring public inspires me, passes into my veins and burns them up.' But this alone would not have wrought the havoc which by 1855 was visible in her person and in her general powers. Things had come to a serious pass with her, when in that year she wrote to M. Emile de Girardin:

'Houssaye told me it was he who gave you the little Louis XV. watch, which you have arranged so daintily by replacing the glass, through which one could see the entrails of the beast, by the enamel in which they have had your humble servant baked. I think, and so does Sarah, the lower part of my face too long. But enamels (*émails*) or rather *émaux*—for everywhere there are *des maux*—cannot be corrected once they have gone through the fire. In any case I think it is a thing not to be worn except after my death. I am so shaky that perhaps this is not very far off. If Madame de Girardin would write for me the part of some consumptive historical personage, if such there be—for I delight in a part with a name to it—I believe I should play it well, and in a way to draw tears, for I should shed them myself. It is all very fine to tell me this is only my nerves; I feel very surely there is a screw loose somewhere. We spoke of the watch; when one turns the key

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too strongly, something goes *crack!* I often feel something go *crack* within me when I screw myself up to act. The day before yesterday, in "Horace," when I was giving Maubant his cue, I felt this *crack*. Yes, my friend, I cracked. This quite *entre nous*, because of my mother and the boys.'

Conscious though she was of this perilous state of health, Rachel was still so bent on making one more grand effort to augment her fortune, that she entered upon an engagement to play for six months in the United States. After performing all her great classical parts in Paris during the summer, she gave seven representations in London, and sailed on August 11 from Southampton for New York. Her success, however, fell far short of what she had anticipated. Corneille and Racine were not attractive to American audiences, and although she supplemented them with 'Adrienne Lecouvreur,' 'Lady Tartufe,' and 'Angelo,' she did not establish any hold upon the public. In the course of forty-two representations the total receipts were a little over £27,000, of which Rachel's share was about half—a very handsome return, but most disappointing to Rachel, who had counted on gains even beyond those which Jenny Lind had shortly before been making across the Atlantic. So feeble was the impression she produced, that it is quite certain Rachel would have lost money had the engagement gone on. But her progress was cut

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short by a bad cold, followed by such an aggravation of her pulmonary weakness, that she was compelled to return to Europe at the end of January, 1856. To be back with those she loved, and with whom she felt her stay could not be long, was all her wish. 'J'ai porté mon nom aussi loin que j'ai pu,' she writes from Havannah (January 7, 1856), 'et je rapporte mon cœur à ceux qui l'aiment.'

Next winter was spent in Egypt, with no abatement of the fatal symptoms. She returned to France, feeling that her work in life was done, and that she would be 'doomed to go in company with pain' for whatever term of life might be vouchsafed her. In October, 1857, she left Paris for Cannet, two miles from Cannes, where the father of M. Victorien Sardou had placed his villa at her disposal. Before quitting Paris she wrote to her friend and fellow-worker, Augustine Brohan: 'Patience and resignation have become my motto. I am grateful to you, dear Mdlle. Brohan, for the kind interest you express; but let me assure you, God alone can do anything for me! I start almost immediately for the South, and hope its pure and warm air will ease my pains a little.' Very touching are the words of a letter to another friend, written at the same time:

'It sometimes seems as though night were settling down suddenly upon me, and I feel a kind

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of great void in my head and in my understanding. Everything is extinguished all at once, and your Rachel is left the merest wreck. Ah, poor me! That *me* of which I was so proud—too proud, perhaps. Behold it to-day, so enfeebled that scarce anything of it is left. . . . Adieu, my friend. This letter will perhaps be the last. You who have known Rachel so brilliant, who have seen her in her luxury and her splendour, who have so often applauded her in her triumphs, what difficulty would you not have in recognising her to-day in the species of fleshless spectre which she has become, and which she carries about with her unceasingly!'

There could have been little in the solitary villa, away from all that had hitherto given zest to Rachel's life, to support her spirits in her long hours of pain. Such, at least, is the impression made by its now sad and somewhat neglected aspect on those who make a pilgrimage to the spot in memory of the great artist. There must have been something in the house more attractive than its exterior gives promise of, if we may judge from Matthew Arnold's fine sonnet:

'Unto a lonely villa in a dell
Above the fragrant warm Provençal shore,
The dying Rachel in a chair they bore
Up the steep pine-plumed paths of the Estrelle,
And laid her in a stately room, where fell
The shadow of a marble Muse of yore,—
The rose-crowned queen of legendary lore,
Polymnia—full on her death-bed. 'Twas well!

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The fret and misery of our northern towns,
In this her life's last day, our poor, our pain,
Our jangle of false wits, our climate's frowns,
Do for this radiant Greek-souled artist cease;
Sole object of her dying eyes remain
The beauty and the glorious art of Greece.'*

As they bore her up those 'steep pine-plumed paths'—pine-plumed, alas! no more—not all the beauty of the islanded bay or of the shifting lights upon the hills that enclose it could have reconciled her restless spirit to its severance from the scenes of her triumphs and of her ambition. She saw too clearly that the end of a life in which the nerves had all along been kept under an unwholesome strain was not far off. The mild air of the South somewhat lightened her pains, but could not arrest the disease. Many sad thoughts of powers

* In one of Mr. Arnold's note-books there is an account of Rachel's last days, which was, no doubt, before him when he wrote this sonnet. 'Cannet,' he writes, 'is a village of very difficult access. The road to it from Cannes is so difficult that horses and carriages cannot pass, but the visitor has to be carried through the ravines and valleys. The house is spacious, beautifully situated in an orange grove, and well guarded from the wind. . . . In the bedchamber—a spacious one, with high snow-white walls, adorned with friezes and sculptures in the antique style—the bed was also white, and seemed carved of stone. At the foot of the bed was a statue of Polyhymnia, wearing on its marble features an expression of intense sadness. Attired in long, sweeping robes, that had a funereal aspect, she leaned on a pedestal that resembled a tomb.' In such surroundings there was little to cheer her in her agonies of pain.

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wasted and unworthy aims pursued must have darkened the solitary hours when she was face to face with those questionings of the spirit that will not be put by. Her art, and all it might have been to her, were among her other thoughts. How much greater glory might she not have achieved, to how much higher account might she not have turned her gifts, how much more might she not have done to elevate and refine her audiences, had she nourished to the last the high aspirations of her youth? Very full of significance is what she said to her sister Sarah, who attended her death-bed: 'Oh, Sarah, I have been thinking of "Polyeucte" all night. If you only knew what new, what magnificent effects I have conceived! In studying, take my word for it, declamation and gesture are of little avail; you have to think, to weep!'*

* M. Legouvé, happening to be in Cannes at the time, went to see Rachel. 'I was told,' he writes, 'that her days were spent in those alternate periods of illusion and sombre clairvoyance which are the invariable symptoms of organic disease. "For six hours a day I am full of hope; during the rest I am plunged in despair."' He then describes somewhat cruelly the great actress as posing in her suffering for effect. 'Mdlle. Rachel felt that her poses as a young invalid were elegant to a degree; she looked upon herself as a beautiful statue personifying "Grief." . . . Three days later she was dead. . . . The reader will remember her rending sobs at the rehearsal of Adrienne, her fear of dying young' (see Note, p. 252, *antea*), 'and the sad phrase, "Soon there will be nothing left of what was Rachel!" She was mistaken. Something *does* remain of her—the halo round her name.'

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Rachel died upon January 3, 1858, conscious to the end. She was fortified in her last moments by the very impressive ceremonial of the Jewish Church, of which she was a stanch adherent, and died in the humble hope of a blessed immortality. As we turn away from the contemplation of a fine career, so sadly and prematurely closed, let us think gently of Rachel's faults and failings, due greatly, beyond all doubt, to the unfavourable circumstances of her life, and the absence of that early moral training by which she might have been moulded into a nobler womanhood. *Pauvre Rachel!*

As an artist, the want of that moral element prevented her from rising to the highest level. Had she possessed it, she must have gone on advancing in excellence to the last. But this she did not do. Even in such parts as Phèdre and Hermione she went back instead of forward. Impersonations that used to be instinct with life became hard and formal. They were still beautiful as studies of histrionic skill, but the soul had gone out of them. A low moral nature—and such assuredly was Rachel's—will always be felt through an artist's work, disguise it how he will, for, as Sir Thomas Browne says, 'The brow often speaks true, eyes have tongues, and the countenance proclaims the heart and inclinations'; and, as we have already said, it shone through the acting of Rachel whenever the part was one in which the individuality of the woman came into play.

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'In that wonderful actress Rachel,' Mrs. Fanny Kemble writes in her 'Records of Later Life, 'whose face and figure, under the transforming influence of her consummate dramatic art, were the perfect interpreters of her perfect dramatic conception, an ignoble low-lived expression occasionally startled and dismayed one—the outward and visible sign of the inward and visible disgrace, which made it possible for one of her literary countrymen and warmest admirers to say that she was adorable, because she was so "*delicieusement canaille*"—Emilie, Camille, Esther, Pauline—such a "delightful blackguard."'

It was this which made her range so limited. Attired in classical costume, and restricted to a style of action which masked that natural deportment which is ever eloquent of character, her hard and unsympathetic nature was for the time lost to view, and the eye was riveted by motions, graceful, stately, passionate, or eager, and the ear thrilled by the varied cadences, the thrilling intensity, the passionate high tones of her beautiful voice. But when her parts approached nearer to common life, when the emotions became more complex and less dignified, the want was quickly felt. If, instead of Corneille and Racine, Rachel had been called upon to illustrate Shakespeare, with all the variety of inflection and subtlety of development which his heroines demand in the performer, she must, we believe, have utterly failed. We in England thought too little of this—and it is a mistake which we have made not in her case alone—in our

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admiration of a style which, to us, was new and only half understood, and we placed her on a pinnacle above our own actresses higher than her deserts. Matthew Arnold shared this mistaken impression when he wrote of her:

> 'Ah! not the radiant spirit of Greece alone
> She had—one power, which made her breast its home!
> In her, like us, there clashed contending powers,
> Germany, France, Christ, Moses, Athens, Rome.
> The strife, the mixture in her soul, are ours;
> Her genius and her glory are her own.'

Had he known more than he did of the dramatic art, of which his knowledge was, in fact, most limited, had he seen more of Rachel on the stage than he did, he could not have failed to see that this variety of suggestion and of style for which, if his words mean anything, they give her credit was not justified. It could have made itself felt only through a much higher and more widely sympathetic nature than fell to the lot of this Jewess of the Jews.

We fell into the same mistake, and less excusably, in the case of Ristori, an artist of powers in every way inferior. The Parisians, wiser than ourselves, found out their mistake in this respect many years ago, so soon as they saw Ristori in Lady Macbeth.*

* This lady opened the eyes of the English public at Drury Lane to the same fact, by playing this character in English. A trial of the public patience so ill-advised and disastrous has rarely been witnessed. It served, however, to show, even to the uncritical, how much of Madame Ristori's success was due, not to truth or refined art, but to mere technical artifice.

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Rachel was too accomplished an artist, and knew the limits of her own powers too well, ever to risk her reputation by subjecting it to such a test. She was essentially a declamatory actress; she depended but little on the emotions of the scene; she cared not at all how she was acted up to. She could not listen well—in her later days, at least, however true it may have been that in her early days Mdlle. Mars gave her credit for excellence in this respect. She did not kindle by conflict with the other characters. Nothing, to our mind, more clearly indicates the actress of a grade not certainly the highest.

The classical French drama demands this power less than our own, but it does demand it in some degree. To excel on our stage, however, it is indispensable that the actress should possess the power of kindling, and, as she kindles, of rising, naturally and continuously, through the gradations of emotion and passion, which our more complex dramatic situations demand, and of sustaining these, so as to retain her hold upon the audience after the voice has ceased to speak. But to do this something more than the accomplishment of art is necessary, and this something is a deep and sincere sensibility, and a moral nature which answers instinctively to the call of the nobler feelings that constitute the materials of tragedy, and also of comedy of the highest kind. It is easy to see that Rachel, with her lack of high intellectual culture,

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and her undisciplined moral nature, could never have met the demands of the Shakespearian drama. Nor, seeing what she was as a woman, how little she possessed of the finer and more tender graces of her sex, can we wonder that she failed, as she did, in parts in which Mars or Duchesnois had succeeded, and erred so frequently in accepting others from which true taste and right womanly feeling would have made her recoil?

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BARON STOCKMAR

If reputation always followed desert, the question 'Who was Baron Stockmar?' would not be so common as it is in general society. His story is unique of its kind. In every sense a remarkable man—remarkable in his gifts, in his career, in the extent and importance of his influence upon leading men and great events—he was in nothing more remarkable than in that stern self-suppression which was content with the accomplishment of the noble aims to which the whole powers of a long life were devoted, without a thought of the personal fame which with most men is the chief incentive to high and sustained effort, and which, if it be an infirmity, is at least the infirmity of noble minds. With every quality to have made himself acknowledged throughout Europe as among the ablest diplomatists and statesmen of his time, he preferred to keep himself in the background, leading what one of his friends called 'an anonymous and subterranean life,' and to let others have all the credit of making many a successful move in the great game of politics, which was, in fact, inspired by himself. Gifted with

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the intuition of true political genius—at once acute and comprehensive in his views—he was not more swift to read afar off with the prescience of the philosophic observer the signs of the coming changes —political, social, and religious—of the period of transition through which we have for some time been passing, than prompt to grapple them with all the practical sagacity of the man of action. Possessing courage and tact equal to every emergency, and with opportunities to have gone to the front, had such been his ambition, Stockmar was certainly one of 'the singular few' of whom Van Artevelde, in Sir Henry Taylor's drama, speaks:

> 'Who, gifted with predominating powers,
> Bear yet a temperate will, and keep the peace.'

And if in any case the truth is to be admitted of the seeming paradox, to which these lines are the prelude, that 'the world knows nothing of its greatest men,' it would surely be in that of Baron Stockmar. For his is not the case of the men of whom this is generally asserted—men who have made a great impression upon their own circle by some exceptional brilliancy of gifts or energy of character, but who have been debarred from a practical career by early death or other dominating causes. Of these it must always be doubtful whether they would have answered to the hopes of their admirers, or have turned out little better than 'the ordinary of Nature's sale-work,' as so many

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promising men constantly do. But of Stockmar it could never be said, as it may be said of these, 'Consensu omnium capax imperii, nisi imperâsset.' His genius, on the contrary, was never more conspicuous than when put to the severest test. It was not only pre-eminently practical, but it rose to difficulties with an elasticity which no obstacle could daunt, and a coolness of judgment which no contingency could surprise.

Working as he did through others, the full extent of Europe's debt to him can never be wholly known, and of not a little that is known it would be premature even now to speak. But this much at least is certain, that, wherever he had power, it was used to advance the welfare and happiness of nations. The bosom friend and counsellor of the heads of the Royal Houses of Belgium and England, his influence with them was due not to his personal loveableness or social qualities, great as these were, still less to the blandishments of the courtier, which *his* Princes equally with himself would have despised, but to the skill and persistency with which he evoked all that was best in their own natures (in which his own nobleness happily found a kindred response), and impressed them with the paramount duty, imposed upon them by their position, of using it not for personal or dynastic purposes, but to make their subjects better, happier, wiser, and nobler in themselves, as well as the founders of a greater future for their successors. Europe is now

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reaping, in many ways, the fruits of his forethought and strenuous endeavour. It was no more than Stockmar's due that a cenotaph should be reared to his memory, as it was, above his grave at Coburg, 'by his friends in the reigning Houses of Belgium, Coburg, England, and Prussia.' Never was tribute more thoroughly deserved, nor, we believe, more sincerely and lovingly rendered. But it is not alone by these friends that Stockmar's name should be held in honoured remembrance. It is one which Belgium, England, and Germany, whose welfare was at once the dream and practical study of his life, should not willingly let die.

Christian Friedrich Stockmar was born at Coburg on August 28, 1787. His father, a man of culture and literary tastes, and some independent means, who held a small magisterial office at Rodach, a little town between Coburg and Hildburghausen, died suddenly, when Stockmar was still young. From his mother he seems to have inherited the combination of humour with strong practical sense which formed a leading feature of his character. Her shrewd judgments on men and things were frequently clothed in language which only wanted the stamp of general use to become proverbial. One of these, 'The Almighty takes care not to let the cow's tail grow too long,' was often in King Leopold's mouth, in times of domestic or political perplexity. Her thoughts in conversation ran naturally into quaint shapes, and in this her son

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resembled her closely. In one of his letters about the *coup d'état* of December, 1851, he gives a good illustration of this peculiarity. 'My mother,' he writes, 'would have said, "Just try to cobble out of that a verse that will clink. If you manage to make the rhymes fit, you have my leave to bake yourself a cake of rusty nails and aqua vitæ." A clever, good woman,' he adds, 'with more practical sense in her little finger than Nicholas, Louis Napoleon, Schwarzenberg, and Manteuffel had in their whole heads.' It is recorded of himself as a boy that he was of an eager, sanguine temperament; quick to observe, fond of fun, with a ready talent for characterizing men and things by apt humorous nicknames, and not indisposed for a mad prank when occasion served. He early showed a love for field sports, and he had turned sixty before he laid aside his gun.

After completing the usual curriculum at the Coburg Gymnasium, he spent the five years between 1805 and 1810 at the Universities of Würzburg, Erlangen, and Jena, in the study of medicine. To his professional training in the study and practice of physic he was indebted for the habit of exact observation, which is never misled into mistaking effects for causes, and which divines what is essential, what merely incidental, as well as for the patient courage which seeks by the removal of disturbing agencies to give full scope to Nature, and to restore her normal and healthy action, rather than by

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active remedies to give apparent relief, at the risk too often of only aggravating the mischief which they profess to cure. It is in this gift of diagnosis that the genius of the great physician lies, and Stockmar appears to have possessed it in a high degree. The habit of mind which his medical studies induced was of infinite value to him in later life, when dealing with social and political phenomena, in the power which it gave him 'of penetrating,' as his friend Carl Friedrich Meyer has said,* 'at a glance, from single expressions and acts, the whole man, or the whole position of things, and, after this diagnosis, of straightway settling his own line of action.' Stockmar felt this strongly himself. Writing in 1853 about the calls made upon his sagacity and judgment by the distinguished personages who had for so many years leant upon his confidential counsels, he says: 'It was a happy hit to have originally studied medicine; without the knowledge, without the psychological and physiological insight thereby obtained, my *savoir faire* must often have gone a-begging.' On Friedrich Rückert, the poet, who made his acquaintance at Würzberg, he left the impression of being a grave, industrious young man, of somewhat retiring and dignified manners.' The strong humorous element in his character appears at that

* In an admirable memoir, which appeared in the *Prussische Jahrbücher*, October, 1863. Herr Meyer was for many years the librarian and secretary of the late Prince Consort.

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time not to have struck the poet, who in the life-long friendship which was afterwards formed between them had good reason to know it; but if their college acquaintance was, as it seems to have been, slight, this was no more than natural. The great humorist is ever sensitive and shy. Intensely sympathetic himself, he must be sure of sympathy before he lets out his heart in the fun, steeped in feeling, in which thoughts often the saddest and emotions the most painful sometimes find relief.

The time, moreover, was not one to inspire cheerfulness in a man who felt strongly, and who loved his country passionately, as Stockmar did. His student's years fell within the period of Germany's deepest degradation. The petty selfishness of the smaller principalities, the shame of her defeats, the grinding domination of Napoleon in his expressed determination 'to cut the wings of the Prussians so closely as to preclude the possibility of their ever again disturbing the French,'* the pitiful internal divisions which strengthened the invader's hands, were enough to banish smiles

* 'These haughty Prussians,' said Napoleon, speaking to a Russian officer, 'low as they are brought, still carry themselves very high. They breathe nothing but vengeance against France, and desire peace only as a means, in time, of executing it; but,' he added with great emphasis, 'they deceive themselves greatly if they expect to rise again to the height of a great power; for their wings shall now be so closely cut as to preclude all possibility of their ever again disturbing us.'—'Diaries and Letters of Sir George Jackson,' vol. ii., p. 167.

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from the lips of the most heedless. These things sank deep into Stockmar's heart, and inspired it with that yearning for the unity and greatness of the Fatherland which burned within it to the last.

These were the days when the assassination of Napoleon was freely talked of among the hot spirits of the Universities as the one specific for their country's wrongs. 'This is the talk of boys; have done with it,' said an old Prussian officer once when Stockmar was present. 'Whoever knows the world knows that the French supremacy cannot last; put your trust in the natural course of events.' The words made a deep impression upon Stockmar. They breathed that confidence in the ultimate justice of Providence; they rested on the conviction that it is to themselves a people must look if they are to become great and a power among the nations, which were ever afterwards abiding principles with him. The day of emancipation was far off, and much had to be done and undergone before it came. But not alone in this instance, but in reference to many other things, which, though desirable, seemed for a time hopeless, Stockmar never bated in heart and hope. His axiom was:

> 'Wait; my faith is large in time,
> And that which shapes it to some perfect end.'

At the end of 1810 Stockmar returned to Coburg and commenced the practice of physic under the

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guidance of his uncle, Dr. Sommer. He soon became conspicuous for his skill in diagnosis, and in 1812 he received the official appointment of *Stadt-und-Land-Physicus*, in which capacity he had to organize and superintend a military hospital in Coburg. It was rapidly filled, at first with the sick and wounded of the French, and afterwards with Russians. The hospital typhus, following in the wake of the armies, established itself there with such virulence that the other physicians deserted the hospital in alarm, and the sole charge of it devolved upon Stockmar and an old surgeon. Contrary to the practice, then universal, but now discarded, of shutting out fresh air from fever patients as much as possible, he flung open the doors and windows of the wards, even in severe weather, and with the best results. But at the end of more than a year of unremitting toil, he was himself struck down by the illness in its worse form. After hovering for three weeks between life and death, he rallied, and so quickly that he was able to march, in January, 1814, with the Ducal Saxon Contingent to the Rhine as Chief Physician. On his arrival at Mayence he was appointed Staff Physician of the Fifth German Army Corps to the hospitals which had been established under the great Stein's directions in Mayence, Oppenheim, Guntersblum, and Worms. His introduction to Stein was somewhat of the roughest. Having no wounded of his own, Stockmar admitted

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wounded French prisoners into the hospital. This was no more than his duty. But all at once came an unexpected rush of German wounded. Stein, thinking only of the fact that there was no room for them, broke into a towering rage. An interchange of strong language ensued, in which Stockmar, according to report, proved fully a match for the great Baron. He at no time wanted courage, and, though recognising fully the greatness of his adversary, it was characteristic of the man that, being in the right, he should, young as he was, maintain his position without flinching.

At the close of the campaign of 1815 Stockmar resumed his official post as physician at Coburg. But here he was not long to remain. He had during the preceding years come under the notice of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, who had then formed so high an opinion of him that, as soon as his marriage with the Princess Charlotte was definitely arranged, he offered him the appointment of physician to his person (*Leibarzt*). The marriage was to take place on May 2, 1816, and on March 29 Stockmar landed at Dover, in obedience to the Prince's summons. Halting at Rochester on the 30th, as his diary records, the roads being dangerous from highwaymen after dark (he must have thought of Gadshill and Prince Hal), he reached London on the 31st. 'The country,' he adds, 'the houses, their arrangements, everything—at least in the neighbourhood

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of London—pleased me extremely; and, in fact, they put me into such spirits, that I often said to myself, "Here you cannot fail to be happy; here it is impossible for you to be ill."' The words were prophetic. In England he found the chief happiness of his after-life, and its climate agreed well with a constitution never strong, and liable to serious intestinal disturbances. These, even in his student years, had checked his energies and crippled the elasticity of his nature, clouding its natural gaiety and enthusiasm with the depression of hypochondria. This was aggravated during many years of his life by great weakness of the eyes. How much he suffered may be seen by the following allusion in one of Rückert's poetical epistles addressed to him:

'Friend, round whose dim eyes hypochondria's snakefolds so closely
Coil, that thy spirit is vexed, dreaming of blindness to be.'

The danger to his eyes passed away, not so the shadows of his besetting malady—a malady not the less poignant that its gloomy presagings are dissipated by the facts of life, and that despondency and self-distrust are often succeeded, when the pressure on the nervous system is removed, by spirits the most joyous, and by a very exuberance of power. Those who were most in contact with Stockmar in his later years would often smile at what seemed in him the mere fancies of the

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Malade Imaginaire, when they contrasted his complaints of weakness with the vigour and versatility of which he was at that very time a striking example, and when they saw him living on into a good old age amid the gloomiest anticipations of approaching death. But that he suffered acutely during these chronic attacks there can be no doubt; and knowing well, as so skilful a pathologist could not fail to know, the organic disease from which they proceeded — a disease demonstrated in his case by a post-mortem examination —his apprehensions were only too well justified.

For some time after his arrival in England Stockmar was greatly out of health. His position in Prince Leopold's household in the first months, with little to do in his medical capacity, and mixing little in society, threw him upon his own resources for amusement. 'Surrounded by the tumult of the fashionable world,' he writes (October, 1817), 'I am solitary, often alone for days together, my books my companions, my friends, my sweethearts'—not the best condition of things for a man prone to hypochondria, and with faculties of the most various kind crying out for active occupation. It seems, indeed, to have given a shade of asperity to the sketches with which at this time he filled his diary of the royal and other personages with whom he was brought into contact. Many of these are far from flattering. But there can be no question as to the

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artistic subtlety of touch which they display. Little, no doubt, did the distinguished objects of some of his sketches dream with what often uncomplimentary accuracy their mental and physical features were being photographed by the luminous brown eyes of the somewhat reserved doctor of the princely household. Here is the Grand Duke Nicholas, the future Czar, then only twenty, as he appeared at Claremont in November, 1816, sketched from the opposite side of the dinner-table, where he sat between the Princess Charlotte and the Duchess of York:

'He is an extraordinarily handsome, winning young fellow, taller than Leopold, without being thin, and straight as a pine. His face as youthful as Leopold's, the features extremely regular, the forehead handsome and open, eyebrows finely arched, nose peculiarly handsome, mouth small and well-shaped, and chin finely chiselled. . . . His deportment is animated, free from constraint and stiffness, and yet very dignified. He speaks French fluently and well, accompanying what he says with gestures not unbecoming. If everything he said was not marked by ability, it was, at any rate, extremely pleasant, and he seems to have a decided talent for saying pretty things to women (*Courmachen*). When he wants, in the course of conversation, to give special emphasis to any remark, he shrugs his shoulders, and casts up his eyes to heaven in rather an affected way. There is an air of great self-reliance about him, but at the same time a manifest absence of pretension.

'He did not pay special attention to the Princess, who turned to address him oftener than he did to

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her. He ate very moderately for his age, and drank nothing but water. When the Countess Lieven played the piano after dinner he kissed her hand, which struck the English ladies as extremely odd, but decidedly desirable. Mrs. Campbell could find no end of praise for him: 'What an amiable creature! He is devilish handsome! He will be the handsomest man in Europe.' Next morning the Russians left the house. I was told that at bedtime a leathern sack, stuffed with hay, was placed in the stable for the Grand Duke by his people, and that he always slept on this. Our Englishmen pronounced this affectation.'*

The Mrs. Campbell whose emphatic admiration of the Grand Duke found expression in the phrase then as common as it would now be startling in a drawing-room was the Princess Charlotte's Bedchamber Woman and Privy Purse. She must have been a stirring element in the small household at Claremont, and her portrait, as drawn by Stockmar, is admirable as a piece of character-painting:

'A little spare woman of five-and-forty, a widow, sharp and angular in every feature and movement, pretentious, because she was once young and pretty, and very intelligent, and yet not insufferably pretentious, just because she is

* This was the Emperor's habit through life. When he visited Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle in 1844, the first thing his valets did was to send to the royal stables for bundles of fresh straw to stuff the leathern wallet which formed the mattress of the camp bed on which he always slept.

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clever. Extremely well-informed and exact, she manages the Princess's correspondence and accounts with the greatest ease, and to perfect satisfaction. In our social circle she sets herself in opposition to everything she sees and hears, and encounters whatever people either say or do with such a consistent resistance, that we are able to calculate with certainty beforehand her answer to our questions. Then, too, this spirit of contradiction so completely masters her, that it is impossible for her to remain true to a side, and, consequently, she is now of the Court party, now of the Ministerial, now of the Opposition, now of the popular faction, just as she happens or not to have somebody to contradict. As a rule, she is without a grain of mercy, and then her language is cuttingly severe. Nevertheless, even she has her human days at times, on which she is acquiescent—nay, even lays down her arms, when her shaft has struck home and rankles. Some light is thrown upon a character so strange, when we hear that she has had bitter experiences of mankind, and was kept alive on brandy-and-water when ill during a seven months' voyage. This lady is at present the only regular female member of our circle, and we therefore concede to her, as the representative of her sex, a homage half spontaneous, half enforced.'

The Claremont household was, in other respects, very pleasantly constituted. It consisted, besides Mrs. Campbell, of Baron Hardenbroek, the Prince's Adjutant and Equerry, Colonel Addenbrooke, and Sir Robert Gardiner. Of all these Stockmar speaks in his letters of the time with warm regard, and the last of them continued through life to be one of his most devoted friends. But what, above

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all, reconciled Stockmar to his position was his attachment to the Prince and Princess—an attachment which was met by equal confidence and regard on their part—and by the delight with which he watched their happiness, and the steady development of those qualities of heart and head which promised so fair a future for themselves and for England. And, indeed, nothing can be more charming than the glimpses which Stockmar's letters and diary afford of that happy interior, and of the chief actors in it, on which the eyes of England were at that time fixed with an intensity only to be understood by those who have heard it spoken of by contemporaries. The story of the Princess's ill-treatment by her father, the sympathy with her position in relation to a mother whom she loved but could not respect, her spirited rupture of a betrothal which had been forced upon her with the Prince of Orange, rather than consent to quit the shores of England, had touched every heart. The delight was therefore universal to see her wedded to the Prince of her choice, who, although still only twenty-five, had already distinguished himself both as a soldier and a diplomatist. The unattractive person and rough-and-ready manners of the Prince of Orange were not forgotten, in contrast with the distinguished bearing and presence of one who, as Napoleon said of him at St. Helena, was the handsomest man whom he saw at the Tuileries in 1806-1807.

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Indeed, his manly beauty was of so high an order that he was selected to impersonate Jupiter at the Court *tableaux vivants* of the Olympian deities at Vienna in 1814. Those who had the best means of observation spoke of him with the warmest praise. 'Always calm, always self-possessed,' writes Baron Hardenbroek, 'he will never be overbearing in prosperity, and never without courage in misfortune. In a word, he is a man of brains and talent, and thoroughly good.' So early as October, 1816, Stockmar writes of him as his 'noble master, *einen menschlichen Fürsten und fürstlichen Menschen*' — an untranslatable phrase, of especial value in the mouth of a man who had even then known enough of the Princes of that epoch to be aware by how little of the element of human-heartedness they were distinguished. Two months later he writes of him:

'The Prince's quiet dignity, his consistency and sound sense, create astonishment even in the English, who are, as a rule, by no means prompt to recognise and admire foreigners, and the exclamations, "He is the most amiable man I ever saw!" "What a complete English gentleman!" "He will be our hope in these dangerous times!" are to be heard on every suitable occasion.'

There could have been no fitter mate for the brilliant, impulsive, wayward spirit of the Princess Charlotte, unschooled as she was by the discipline and pure example of happy family life in those

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habits of self-control and consideration for others which should be the distinction of Princes. Clever, well-informed, bright, with warm feelings, and a disposition unspoiled even by persecutions that might well have soured the most amiable nature, her sincere, affectionate nature could not fail to be moulded, under the influence of such a husband, into something as engaging and noble in the woman as, in despite, or perhaps even because of, some eccentricities of demeanour, it had been interesting in the girl. Stockmar's introduction to her took place at Oatlands three days after her marriage. It is graphically told in a letter the same day:

'It was in Oatlands that I first saw the Sun. Baron Hardenbroek walked towards the breakfast-room, I following, when all at once he made a signal to me with his hand to stay behind; but she had seen me, and I her. "Aha, docteur! Entrez!"'

Although he found her more beautiful than he had expected, the first impression was not favourable. This was apparently due to a volubility of speech and restlessness of manner for which he was not prepared; but that evening, he says, he liked her better. 'Dress,' he adds, 'simple and tasteful.' Later on (September 8, 1816), he records that he never saw her in any dress that was not, and he is then writing almost in the very atmosphere of the charm:

'The Princess in good humour, and then it costs

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her little trouble to please. Her dress struck me as very beautiful—dark red roses in her hair, light blue short dress, without sleeves, etc.'

He had long before this become a favourite with the Princess, and she marked her partiality openly, even in the presence of guests of the highest distinction. No wonder, when one thinks of the rare union of experience, thoughtfulness, and humour, which he must have thrown into his conversation with her! Nor was she likely to be the less drawn towards him, that her husband was by this time so deeply impressed by his rare qualities as to call him 'the precious physician, both of his soul and body.' Stockmar, on his side, loved her too well not to watch her with a critical eye. 'The Princess,' he writes (October 25, 1816), 'is full of movement and vivacity, amazingly sensitive, and nervously susceptible, and the feeling roused by the impression of the moment often determines both her conclusions and her conduct.' He notes at the same time the amazing progress she has made, under her husband's influence, in repose and self-command, and that every day makes it more and more apparent how thoroughly good and sound she is at heart. The relations between herself and the Prince were perfect. A few days previous to the letter just quoted Stockmar writes:

'In this house reign harmony, peace, love—all the essentials, in short, of domestic happiness. My master is the best husband in the world, and his

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wife has for him an amount of love which, in vastness, can only be likened to the English National Debt.'

And, ten months later (August 26, 1817):

'The married life of this pair is a rare picture of love and fidelity. Nor does this picture ever fail to produce a deep impression on all who see it, and have a morsel of heart left within them.'

When the promise of an heir came to augment this happiness, and to gratify the yearnings of the nation, it was natural that the Prince and Princess should press upon Stockmar an appointment as one of her physicians. To most other men the personal honour would have been irresistible. Not so with Stockmar. It was never his way to look only at one side of a question, and in this instance his sagacity did not fail him. Though not the Princess's physician, he had occasionally prescribed for her; but from the moment of her pregnancy he declined to take any part in her treatment. His reasons were unquestionably sound. His position must of necessity have been subordinate to that of Dr. Baillie, the Princess's physician, and the appointment of a foreigner would have been most unacceptable, not merely to the medical profession, but to the nation. Had things gone well, the credit would never have been given to him; if, on the other hand, they went amiss, on him the blame would most certainly be cast. Nor would this blame, probably, have rested on him alone: it could scarcely

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fail to have recoiled on the Prince himself for having trusted to the aid of a stranger when the whole English faculty was at his disposal.

But Stockmar was no indifferent observer of the progress of affairs. A lowering system of treatment, then the fashion,* was adopted with the Princess. Satisfied that this was all wrong, Stockmar, after the first three months, spoke out fully to the Prince, and begged him to make the Princess's physicians aware of his views. These remonstrances were apparently without avail. Stockmar could do no more. Had it been otherwise, we cannot but feel that no personal consideration, no fear of violating that professional etiquette to which many a life has been sacrificed, would have held his hands. But although, as he says, he never apprehended the fearful result which ensued, his conviction as to the error in treatment was so deep, that he refused the offer made to him by anticipation, flattering as it was, that he should undertake the medical care of the Princess after her accouchement.

'When I reflect once more upon the circumstances,' he says, writing two months after the fatal issue of that event, 'I feel only too vividly

* At his very first meeting with Sir Richard Croft, the Queen's accoucheur, Stockmar saw the fatal weakness of his character. 'A tall, spare man,' is the entry in his diary, 'past the prime of life—hasty, well-meaning; seems to possess more experience than knowledge and judgment.'

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the greatness of the danger which I escaped. Trust me, all—ay, *all*—would now be rejoicing at my interference, which could not have been of the least avail, and the English doctors, our household companions, friends, acquaintances, the nation, the Prince himself, would find the cause of this seemingly impossible disaster in the bungling of the German doctor. And I should myself, with my hypochondriac tendency, have given credence to the imputations of others, and been driven, by the anguish inflicted from without, from self-torture to despair.'*

The authentic story of the sad catastrophe was made public for the first time from Stockmar's diary ('Denkwürdigkeiten aus den Papieren des Freihernn Christian Friedrich v. Stockmar,' by his son, Ernst Freiherr v. Stockmar; Brunswick, 1872). At 9 p.m. on November 5, 1817, after a protracted labour of fifty-two hours, which no artificial means were taken to abridge, the Princess

* Sir Richard Croft was so driven, and shot himself at a patient's house in February, 1818. 'I never knew anything more horrible than the death of poor Croft,' says Sydney Smith, writing to Lady Mary Bennett at the time. 'What misery the poor fellow must have suffered between the Princess's death and his own!' On November 7 previous, the day after the Princess's death, Croft had written to Stockmar, whose warnings must then have recurred to him with a terrible pang: 'My mind is just now in a pitiable state. God grant that neither yourself, nor anyone that is dear to you, should ever have to suffer what I experience at this moment!' Surely Dr. Baillie was not less to blame than Croft, especially as the error seems to have been one of treatment previous to, as well as at, the actual accouchement.

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gave birth to a dead male child. The mother seemed so well, that the Ministers and others who had been summoned left Claremont, believing that all danger was past. But before they could have reached London things had assumed a very different aspect.

'At midnight Croft came to my bedside, took me by the hand, and said, "The Princess is dangerously ill, the Prince alone—would I go to him and make him aware how matters stood?" The Prince had not left his wife one moment for three days, and, after the birth of the child, had retired to rest. I found him composed about the death of the child, and he did not seem to view the Princess's state with any apprehension. A quarter of an hour later Baillie sent me word that he wished me to see the Princess. I hesitated, but at last went with him. She was suffering from spasms of the chest and difficulty of breathing, in great pain, and very restless, and threw herself continually from one side of the bed to the other, speaking now to Baillie, now to Croft. Baillie said to her, "Here comes an old friend of yours." She held out her left hand to me hastily, and pressed mine warmly twice. I felt the pulse: it was going very fast—the beats now strong, now feeble, now intermittent. Baillie kept plying her with wine. She said to me, "They have made me tipsy." After this I went in and out of the room twice in about a quarter of an hour, and then the breathing became stertorous. I had just gone out of the room, when she called out vehemently, "Stocky! Stocky!" I returned; she was quieter; the death-rattle continued, she turned several times upon her face, drew up her legs, the hands grew cold, and

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about 2 a.m. of November 6, 1817, some five hours after her delivery, she was no more.'

On Stockmar devolved the task of announcing her death to the Prince.

'I did it,' he says, 'in not very definite terms. He felt convinced she was still not dead, and on his way to her he fell into a chair. I knelt beside him. He thought it was all a dream; he could not believe it. He sent me again to her to see. I came back, and told him all was over. He now went to the chamber of death. Kneeling down by the bed, he kissed the cold hands, then, raising himself up, he pressed me to him and said, "I am now utterly forlorn; promise you will stay with me always!" I gave the promise. Immediately afterwards he asked me again, "Was I fully aware of what I had promised?" I said yes; I would never forsake him so long as I felt assured he had confidence in me, and loved me, and that I could be useful to him.'

The pledge asked and given in that terrible hour was splendidly redeemed on the one side, while its conditions were most loyally fulfilled on the other. 'I had no hesitation,' writes Stockmar to his sister a few days afterwards, 'in giving a promise upon which the Prince may perhaps set a value all his life, or may desire to dispense with the very next year.' All doubt on that point was, however, soon at an end. Little, probably, had the Prince imagined, when calling Stockmar 'the physician of his soul as well as body' some months before, how deep a truth lay in his words. By his own avowal, years after-

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wards, he would probably have sunk under his bereavement, but for the support of Stockmar's wise sympathy and friendship.* It was in truth a noble friendship on both sides, cemented by the tears which only such men weep for an affliction that, in King Leopold's own words in 1862 ('Reminiscences,' in Appendix to General Grey's 'Early Years of the Prince Consort,' p. 389), 'destroyed at one blow his every hope,' and took from life a sense of happiness which he never recovered.

The shock to Stockmar himself was great, but the necessity of thinking for the greater sufferer acted upon him as a tonic both moral and physical. All he saw of the Prince deepened his affection and respect. 'The favour of Princes,' he writes some weeks afterwards, 'is, generally speaking, not worth a rush; but he is in every respect an upright, good man, and consequently an incomparable Prince.' Leopold, in the end of November, gives him some of his letters to the Princess before their marriage to read, in which Stockmar finds that the Prince 'figures with singular high-mindedness, prudence, and goodness.' Again, on December 21, Stockmar writes: 'He is good, every day better; he turns all his misery to good. His calamity has

* 'Il a été témoin des jours de mon bonheur; plus tard, quand il a plu à la Providence de m'accabler de malheurs, que je n'avais presque la force de supporter, il a été mon fidèle soutien et ami' (letter by the Prince in 1824, introducing Stockmar to an eminent statesman).

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made him shy of hoping much from the future; but that his soul will thrive, of that I can be sworn. It wants a great deal of heart to love him as he deserves.'

More than forty years afterwards, reading over the letter to his sister just quoted, in which he records his promise to the Prince, he comes upon these words: 'I seem to exist rather to take thought for others than for myself, and with this destiny I am quite content.' The words struck the old man, and they might well do so, so prophetic were they of his future. But the comment of a man so independent, and so austere in his estimate of character and conduct, is such a tribute as it has not often been the lot of Kings to earn: 'Forty long years could in no way abate the sentiment which the Prince's disaster then led me to express.'

After the Princess Charlotte's death Stockmar ceased to act as the Prince's physician, and became his Private Secretary and the Controller of his household. In this capacity his range of varied practical gifts had a freer scope. He gave early proof of his sagacity by persuading the Prince to remain in England, instead of going to the Continent for change of scene, as he was urged by his relatives and friends to do. The whole country was plunged in grief, and Stockmar rightly urged that good feeling and gratitude for the confidence and sympathy of the nation demanded that the

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Prince should remain to mourn with it in England. Moreover, although England no longer presented a field for his active ambition, to England the Prince was indebted for both fortune and position; and nowhere else could he either have enjoyed the same consideration or been so well placed for availing himself of any turn of events, which might open a worthy career for a man still so young and of abilities so distinguished.

From this time till 1831 Stockmar resided with Prince Leopold in England, a residence only broken by journeys with the Prince to Italy, France, and Germany, and an occasional stay in Coburg. Stockmar married his cousin, Fanny Sommer, there in 1821, and established a home for his wife and children; but he was sometimes unable to visit it for years, and, until his seventieth year, he did so only at irregular intervals. 'No small sacrifice,' says his son, 'for a man of his warm feelings and strong domestic instinct.' The Prince's position in England was by no means an easy one, but he maintained it with unabated popularity to the last. For much of this he seems to have been indebted to Stockmar.

'The prudent, genial liberality with which he kept house,' says Meyer, in the 'Memoir' from which we have already quoted, 'the fine tact with which he took up and kept a position outside of party, his well-measured attitude in his twofold character of German Prince and handsomely-endowed widower of the King's daughter, would

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scarcely have been maintained so well without the counsel and assistance of his new Secretary and Controller of the Household.'

During these years of comparative quiet Stockmar had the best opportunities for observing all that was passing in Europe, both at home and abroad. Of England and its Constitution he made a special study. As the one constitutional monarchy of the world, it had a peculiar interest for a man of his strong liberal opinions. No man understood better the character and temper of the people, or foresaw more clearly the critical changes which were impending. For him, too, as well as for Prince Leopold, a special interest in the future of the country and its rulers had arisen through the marriage of Leopold's sister, the Princess of Leiningen, in May, 1818, to the Duke of Kent, and the birth of Princess Victoria in the following May. The Duke's death in January, 1820, in circumstances of pecuniary embarrassment, threw upon the Prince the care of the future heiress to the throne. The happiest days of my childhood, Queen Victoria has told us ('Early Years,' p. 392), were spent with him at Claremont; and she has recorded on his monument in St. George's Chapel, that to her he had been as a father through life. Knowing what we now know of the character of the men, we see how natural it was that the Prince and his far-seeing friend should spare no pains to realize, through the Princess so singularly thrown

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upon their care, such a future for the people and monarchy of England as, before the catastrophe of 1817, they may have dreamed of effecting upon the succession of the Princess Charlotte to the throne. Such a task was especially fitted to the genius of Stockmar and his passion for working for the good of others; and at a later period we shall see how zealously he seconded the efforts of his Prince towards this noble end.

The resolution of the Great European Powers, in 1829, to create a kingdom of Greece broke the long period of political and personal inactivity to which Prince Leopold had been condemned, and which could not be otherwise than irksome to a man of his energy and ambition. The prospect of occupying its throne, while appealing not only to his scholarly enthusiasm, but also to a romantic element in his character, which the calm and undemonstrative bearing of the man, as he was known to the outside world, by no means prepared them to expect, seemed to offer such opportunities for making a name in history, that the Prince grasped them with an eagerness of which his wise friend and secretary did not approve. This led him, contrary to Stockmar's advice, to commit the imprudence of accepting the tender of the crown, without having previously settled the terms, both as to territory and finance, which on closer inquiry he found to be indispensable, thoroughly to establish its independence, and to rescue the affairs of the country from

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internal confusion. The decision ultimately come to by the Prince, to withdraw from his promise, when he found these terms could not be obtained, was, as events have proved, a wise one; but it exposed him at the time to much obloquy and misrepresentation, giving, as it unquestionably did, a semblance of truth to the charges of vacillation and irresolution, which those who had intrigued against his candidature were active in bringing forward. Nor did the charges stop here. His conduct, according to the Russian Ambassador, Matuszewicz, showed so much sinister design, so much bad faith, that he was delighted not to see upon the throne a man who would have betrayed the confidence of the Powers to whom he owed it.

'What say you,' writes von Stein, 'to the behaviour of Prince Leopold? It is quite in character with the Marquis *Peu-à-peu*, as George IV. called him. Instead of surmounting the difficulties—instead of completing the task he had begun—he withdraws his hand cravenlike from the plough, calculating on the contingencies likely to arise upon the death, which cannot be distant, of King George IV. A man of this flaccid character is wholly unfit to grapple vigorously with life: he has no colour.'

All this, of course, was the mere idle conjecture of those supersubtle diplomatists who think it a libel on their sagacity to accept a simple and straightforward reason for a course of action, so long as a remote and mysterious one can be devised.

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The absurdity of the supposition, that the decision of the Prince was influenced by hopes of the English regency, is so outrageous that it can now only provoke a smile. The fact is, the Prince would have made almost any sacrifice for such a throne as that of Greece, could he have seen any prospect before him but failure under the conditions attached to its acceptance. For not only did his ultimate resolution cost him intense pain at the time, but long afterwards. When all the difficulties had been overcome which attended the establishment of the Belgian monarchy, and when he was generally looked upon as of all Kings the most to be envied, he was haunted by regrets that his dream in connection with the land of Homer and Sophocles, of Pericles and Plato, had not been realized. Greece to the last had a charm for his imagination, in the face of which the sober hues of Belgian life and of a Belgian sky looked cold and unattractive. Stockmar, with a wiser appreciation, lent no countenance to these wistful yearnings of a spirit, in which the toil and trammels of a monotonous, though busy and successful, life had been unable to quench the fire of romance.

'As for the poesy,' he wrote in reply to some such expression of feeling, 'which Greece would have afforded, I set small store by it. Mortals only see the bad side of what they have, and the good side of what they have not. Herein lies the whole difference between Greece and Belgium;'

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adding, with characteristic humour, 'although it is not to be denied that when, after a host of vexations, the first Greek King shall have succumbed, his life may possibly furnish the poet with a splendid subject for an epic poem.'

To think that Stockmar had no sympathy with the poetical side of this or any similar question, would be to do him wrong; but his imagination, like that of all thoroughly able men, 'had its seat in reason, and was judicious.' Day-dreams have their value at holiday seasons; but where men and States are in question, especially men in a state of excitement, and States in the crisis of formation, the duty of imagination is not to revel in ideal visions, but, looking at facts as they are, to anticipate all possible combinations, and to provide against all possible contingencies. When, therefore, the Belgians, after the revolution of 1830, offered to Prince Leopold the sceptre of the kingdom, which their leaders had determined to establish, he was not likely, with the experience he had gained, and with Stockmar at his side, to fall again into the mistake of a too hasty acceptance. No urgency could induce him to reply to the proposals of the Belgian Congress, until they had ratified the articles known as the 'Eighteen Articles,' which had been agreed on by the London Conference of the European Powers. It appears that even then he had grave misgivings, fearing that the new Belgian Constitution, from its extremely democratic character, would

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not work. He referred the matter to Stockmar. The manner in which the Baron dealt with the question is too remarkable not to be told in his own words, as reported by Professor Neumann, of Munich. The conversation during dinner one day at the Professor's house in 1845 had turned upon Louis Philippe's Government, and the unscrupulous game of his advisers—how they falsified the Constitution, and were likely to hurry on a fresh revolution.

'I have confidence in peoples as a mass,' said Stockmar; 'they feel to the very core, if not at once, at least after a time, who deals honourably by them, and who tries to beguile them with mere shams. I hold by our old-fashioned German proverb, *Ehrlich währt am längsten*, or, as the English say, "Honesty is the best policy." This was the keynote of everything I said, when the King desired to have my opinion about anything. I will give you an instance.

'After a careful study of the Belgian Constitution, my master doubted whether, with such laws, a State could be governed, and liberty and order, the two inseparable conditions of a civilized community, could be maintained. "Dear Stockmar," he said, "pray read over the Constitution, and tell me your opinion." I went through the new fundamental law with great attention, compared the different articles one with another, and found that, in point of fact, the power of the Government is very greatly restricted. But my firm reliance on the people carried me through. "True"—it was in something like these terms that I addressed my intelligent master—"perfectly true; the power of

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the King and his Ministers is very greatly limited by this Constitution. Make the experiment, whether all this liberty is compatible with order; make the experiment of governing in the spirit of this Constitution, and do this in a thoroughly conscientious spirit. If you then find, that with such a basis good government is impossible, send, after a time, a message to the Chambers, frankly stating your experiences, and indicating the defects of the Constitution. If you have really acted up to the best of your knowledge and convictions, the people will assuredly stand by you, and willingly concur in all the changes which are demonstrably necessary."

'King Leopold followed my advice. You know, Herr Professor, that no serious inconveniences have resulted, and that in many respects Belgium stands out as a model among European States.'

Here we see the courage and the faith of a man made to grapple with practical difficulties, who knows when prudence is a mistake, and when it is true wisdom to run even a great risk for a great end. This quality of Stockmar's mind was put to the proof in the critical events and difficult negotiations of the next three years. He accompanied the King to Brussels in July, 1831, where his immediate duty was the organization of the royal establishment. Neither then, however, nor at any future time, did he accept any official appointment in Belgium, but was attached only to the King as a private adviser and friend. Having been a member of Leopold's English establishment, provision very properly was made for him by one of the few pen-

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sions of a similar character, which continued to be paid out of the provision of £50,000 settled on the Prince upon his marriage. When he became King of the Belgians, Leopold placed this provision at the disposal of the English Government, subject to certain conditions as to the maintenance of Claremont, and the payment of his English debts and pensions, in a letter drafted by Stockmar, which silenced by anticipation the clamours of the Dilkes of the period, who were thus deprived of the opportunity, for which they were lying in wait, to make capital for themselves out of the anomaly of a foreign King receiving an income from the English Exchequer. The arrangement of this transaction, which was full of difficulty, was carried through by Stockmar's tact and firmness with entire success. Reasonable as the King's stipulations were, there were not wanting cavillers, headed by a certain Sir Samuel Whalley, a retired mad-doctor, who tried to get up a Parliamentary inquiry on the subject.

'The case seems to me as clear as day,' Lord Palmerston wrote to Stockmar in 1884, in reference to Whalley's notice of motion, 'and, without meaning to question the omnipotence of Parliament, which, it is well known, can do anything but turn men into women, or women into men, I must and shall assert, that the House of Commons has no more right to inquire into the details of these debts and engagements, which the King of the Belgians considers himself bound to satisfy, before he begins to make his payments into the Exchequer, than

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they have to ask Sir Samuel Whalley how he disposed of the fees which his mad patients used to pay him, before he began to practise upon the foolish constituents who have sent him to Parliament. There can be no doubt whatever, that we must positively resist any such inquiry; and I am very much mistaken in my estimate of the present House of Commons, if a large majority do not concur in scouting so untenable a proposition.'

The Whalley of that period no doubt got wind of what he had to expect, and, having some grains of discretion, allowed his motion to drop.

Stockmar's presence in London on this affair, between 1831 and 1834, as the King's confidential agent, enabled him to be of the utmost service in clearing away the numerous difficulties which had to be overcome before the guarantee of the independence of Belgium by the five Great Powers was finally secured.* The position was one of extreme difficulty. On the one hand, Belgium, although it had been signally defeated in the field by Holland, and driven to shelter itself behind the bayonets of the French, clung obstinately to certain conditions. On the other hand, Holland, backed by the intrigues of Talleyrand, and availing itself of the jealousies of France entertained by England and the Northern Powers, was equally pertinacious in resisting. To overcome the mutual distrust of the five Powers, and the obstinacy of the two chief parties, was a

* See on this subject Lord Dalling's 'Life of Lord Palmerston,' vol. ii., p. 23, note.

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problem which tasked all the ability of the distinguished men in whose hands the official negotiations on the side of Belgium rested. Stockmar's unofficial intervention, through his personal relations with the representatives of the different Governments, was carried on, not only without wounding the susceptibilities of General Goblet and M. Van de Weyer, but with their entire concurrence. They knew too well his value in council and in negotiation, not to avail themselves gladly of his assistance, and their relations with him were those of the most complete confidence and the warmest mutual esteem. It was his special business, moreover, to strengthen the courage of the King under the discouragements and difficulties, which tried the firmness and patience of Leopold to the uttermost. Thus, on September 10, 1831, he writes in these terms:

'Meanwhile, I call upon your Majesty for only this much:

'1. Never to lose heart.

'2. Never to relax in activity, *on which your enemies base their hopes!*'

He was, no doubt, familiar with the old charge, that the King's character was 'flaccid,' that he had no colour.

'3 Not to forget the *civil* organization in the *military*. The nation must see that, in the very thick of the storm, the concerns of peace are being

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pushed on. That hopes of peace should be kept alive, even though they should come to nothing in the end, is of the utmost importance' (p. 186).

When at length the London Conference had arrived at a fresh basis of settlement, known as the 'Twenty-four Articles,' some of these, as to the limits of territory and the amount of the National Debt to be charged on Belgium, were rejected by that country as too favourable to Holland, and fresh difficulties arose, of a character so serious that the King seems even to have meditated abdication. Here the admirable clear-sightedness and courage of Stockmar proved themselves equal to the emergency. In a letter of October 10, 1831, to the King, urging upon him the acceptance of these Articles unconditionally, after pointing out that the difference between the demands of Belgium and those conceded by the Conference was not so important as to affect in any way the welfare of the kingdom, he proceeds:

'The true welfare of Belgium depends at this moment on a speedy peace, the establishment of a good administration, the annihilation of parties at home, all which are especially secured by the prompt recognition of the independence of Belgium by the whole of Europe. . . . Abdication? For Belgium itself this would not be productive of the smallest advantage, but rather of extreme mischief. It would either lead to a general war, with a restoration as its consequence, or to the union with France, or possibly to the partition of the

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country. To the King, moreover, resignation would bring no one real advantage, though irritated feeling may point to a different conclusion. At the most, the King may lose ground for a time by his acceptance of the Twenty-four Articles—that is, he may be less popular for a short time with the unreasoning, inconstant multitude. For this there is a sovereign remedy. Let him prove himself upright, firm, energetic, a King of brains, and we shall see whether, in a very short time, he is not again the most popular monarch in Europe. On the other hand, abdication would ruin him in the eyes of Europe. He would appear weak, inconstant, short-sighted, incompetent for the task he had undertaken. *The King went to Belgium to secure peace for Europe, and to vindicate there the cause of Constitutional Monarchy. That is the mission which he has pledged himself to Europe, to the Powers, to Belgium, to fulfil. That there are difficulties to contend with is no reason for throwing down his arms. The King's task is a fine one: let him show himself worthy of it.*

'Let him not lose a moment in forcing his Ministers to an explanation, whether they will remain if he accepts the Twenty-four Articles. If they will not, let him form a new Ministry on the spot.'

The armistice between Holland and Belgium was on the point of expiring; the decision of the Conference, Stockmar had assured himself, was final; and every other consideration, he felt, was comparatively unimportant, when the independence, if not the very existence, of the new kingdom was at stake. The Twenty-four Articles abridged in

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not unimportant particulars the territory secured to Belgium by the Eighteen Articles, and Leopold, on ascending the throne, had sworn to maintain the integrity of the kingdom as thereby defined. His acceptance of the Twenty-four Articles, therefore, involved a point of honour. Stockmar, however, had this fully in view, and he was able to relieve the scruples of the King by conveying to him the decided opinion of Earl Grey—than whom, as Leopold well knew, no one had a nicer sense of what was right in such matters—that this was not a difficulty which should cause a moment's hesitation. No time was to be lost, and Stockmar followed his letter to Brussels to enforce his views in person. The result is well known. The King resolved to follow his advice, as above given, to the letter. On November 1 the Twenty-four Articles were adopted by the Chamber of Representatives; and on the 15th the treaty, based upon them, which secured the neutrality and independence of the country was signed in London on behalf of Belgium by M. Van de Weyer. The decision thus come to was probably not uninfluenced by the knowledge that, in a different event, the King had determined to appeal to the country, 'and to abdicate, if the new Chamber persisted in the negative vote.'*

Much had yet to be done, and numberless

* Juste's 'Memoirs of Leopold I.,' vol. i., p. 197. English edition.

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diplomatic difficulties to be surmounted, before the new kingdom could be said to be fairly established under the guarantee of the five Powers. At every stage Stockmar lent his active aid—in counsel and in negotiation; and so essential was his continuous presence in London and at Brussels felt to be, that from 1831 to 1834 he was unable even to visit his home at Coburg. In the May of the latter year, however, things were so far settled, that he felt himself free to seek the repose which the state of his health, shaken by the anxieties and fatigues of the three previous years, greatly needed. But from his quiet Thuringian retreat he continued to watch with wakeful eyes the progress of events in Europe, and he was kept, by his voluminous correspondence with the King of the Belgians and others, fully posted up in all the political movements and their secret history.

In 1836 his active services were called into play in conducting the negotiations for the marriage of Queen Donna Maria of Portugal with Prince Ferdinand, the son of the younger brother of the then reigning Duke of Coburg. Intrigues were already on foot to secure the Queen's hand for the Duke de Nemours. These came to nothing, thanks to the firm attitude of the English Cabinet: a defeat which was probably not forgotten when Louis Philippe, to his own ultimate ruin, carried through without scruple his wretched scheme of the Spanish marriages. One of Stockmar's diffi-

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culties was the young man's father, who, not liking the precarious aspect of things in Portugal, wished to stipulate for an English guarantee of his son's provisions under the Marriage Treaty. Stockmar had to tell him in plain language that this was out of the question, and to remind him of the adage, 'Nothing venture, nothing have,' which he was just the man to do with an energy that admitted of no reply.

But the time had now come for Stockmar's entrance on a more serious task. The Princess Victoria was approaching eighteen, her legal majority, and in the ordinary course of events the succession to the throne could scarcely fail to open to her before many years. The unremitting affection with which the young Princess had hitherto been watched over by her uncle was now animated by the twofold duty of fitting her for the brilliant but difficult position in which she might soon be placed, and at the same time securing her happiness by marriage with a Prince whose abilities and moral strength might safely be relied on in every emergency. No one could know so well as Leopold how pre-eminently qualified his bosom friend and adviser Stockmar was for the first of these duties; for had he not himself, under his guidance, come to be recognised as a pattern of constitutional monarchs? The Princess had, moreover, known Stockmar from childhood, and the prospect of such a counsellor, when presented

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to her by her uncle early in 1836, was naturally welcomed with a feeling of delight. The arrangement was that he should come to England in May, 1837, in which month the Princess would reach majority, so as to be near her as a confidential adviser and assistant. But in the meantime Leopold had taken earnest counsel with his friend as to the future husband of his niece. It is now well known* that her cousin, Prince Albert, had been from childhood designated in his own family for this honour. The King had, therefore, kept an anxious watch upon his nephew's boyhood and youth, and the result, to use his own language,† was the conviction that her union with him would be, of all others, the best for her happiness. Stockmar had seen less of the Prince, and it appears from his letters in this volume, published by his son, that he was too deeply conscious of the greatness of the stake to accept even Leopold's opinion on this subject.

'Albert,' he writes in 1836, 'is a fine young fellow, well grown for his age, with agreeable and valuable qualities; and who, if things go well, may in a few years turn out a strong, handsome man, of a kindly, simple, yet dignified bearing. Externally, therefore, he possesses all that pleases the sex, and at all times and in all countries must please. It may prove, too, a lucky circumstance

* 'Early Years,' pp. 17, 84, and 213.

† Letter to the Queen of October 24, 1849. 'Early Years,' p. 231.

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that even now he has something of an English look.

'But now the question is, How as to his mind? On this point, too, one hears much to his credit. But these judgments are all more or less partial, and until I have observed him longer, I can form no judgment as to his capacity and the probable development of his character. He is said to be circumspect, discreet, and even now cautious. But all this is not enough. He ought not merely to have great ability, but a *right* ambition, and a great force of will as well. To pursue a political career so arduous for a lifetime demands more than energy and inclination—it demands also that earnest frame of mind, which is ready of its own accord to sacrifice mere pleasure to real usefulness. If he is not satisfied hereafter with the consciousness of having achieved one of the most influential positions in Europe, how often will he feel tempted to repent what he has undertaken? If he does not from the very outset accept it as a vocation of grave responsibility, on the efficient fulfilment of which his honour and happiness depend, there is small likelihood of his succeeding.'

'Who,' he adds, 'should know more than myself of the mystery of such a career? who has thought over it so much, or had such experience of it?' Well might he say so. It must have engaged his thoughts from the hour when he first set foot in England, with a view to the position and duties of Prince Leopold as consort of a future English Queen. It must have cost him long meditation with reference to the Princess, who had played about his knees, undreaming of the great

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future opened to her by the event which had overthrown her uncle's hopes. And all its difficulties, and all the high qualities of mind and heart by which alone they could be met, must have been brought home to him, as to no other man, by the experience he had gathered in connection with the creation of the Belgian kingdom, as well as by what he foresaw of the rapid growth of democratic tendencies in England. Till, therefore, he had full means of observing the Prince's character, he declined to commit himself. If his scrutiny proved satisfactory, his opinion was that the very first thing to be done was to lay all the difficulties of the undertaking fully before the Prince. If he did not take fright at these, then two essential considerations came immediately into play: (1) The Prince must be educated for his future career according to a careful plan, consistently carried out, with constant reference to the special country and people. (2) Before appearing as a suitor the liking of the Princess must be secured, and upon this liking, and this alone, the suit itself must be based.

With his usual thoroughness, Stockmar at once grappled with the question of the place where the education of the future consort of an English Queen could best be conducted. Coburg would never do. Able tutors might not be wanting there; but what chance had the Prince of learning what men are, or how to cope with them, at a

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small Court, where frank intercourse with other men on equal terms was impossible? Berlin, Vienna, the German Universities, were all undesirable. Berlin? 'The thing of primary importance, a just view of the present state of Europe, would scarcely be acquired there.' The Prince would hear everything there about politics except the truth. Socially, too, the Berlin tone was formal and priggish, and for Princes, at least, not to be commended. All that could be learned there would be the arts of administration and war, but whatever was essential in these directions could be learned elsewhere. Besides, profligacy in Berlin was epidemic, and to keep young men out of harm's way in this respect was harder there than in any other place. Vienna? That was no school for a German Prince. The Universities? Their training was too one-sided and theoretical for a Prince whose vocation would be to deal practically with men and things on a great scale. Brussels seemed to Stockmar to combine the most favourable conditions. The Prince would be there under the eye and influence of his uncle, who was living in the full stream of European politics, and working out the problem of constitutional government where it had been hitherto unknown; and whether the English plan was brought to bear or not, the Prince would be far more likely to profit by the study of politics in the free and stirring arena of a constitutional kingdom, than in one where the

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whole machine of government was propelled from a monarchical centre. The advice was followed, and accordingly the Prince spent ten months in 1836-1837 with his brother in Brussels.

Before going there the young men had, along with their father, visited the Duchess of Kent at Kensington Palace. Already there were numerous suitors in the field for the Princess's hand. The time for introduction Stockmar therefore conceived had arrived; 'but,' he writes (p. 314), 'it must be made a *sine quâ non*, that the object of the visit be kept secret from both the Prince and Princess, so as to leave them completely at their ease.' The desired impression was produced upon the Princess. Having ascertained this, King Leopold lost no time in making her aware of what was contemplated, and we have Her Majesty's assurance that from that moment she never entertained the thought of any other marriage.* It was not until

* What does Baron Ernst Stockmar mean by saying ('Merkwürdigkeiten,' p. 330) that the Queen tells us in the 'Early Years' 'she had never *quite* given up the idea of this marriage,' when Her Majesty's assurance that she never dreamed of giving it up is absolute? In the very next sentence the Baron informs us that the Queen, in the beginning of 1838, entrusted Stockmar with the duty of accompanying the Prince on his travels, with the express view of assisting in the completion of his education. Her Majesty may have hesitated as to the *time* for the marriage, and the remarkable outburst of contrition on this subject in the 'Early Years' (p. 220) is not likely to be forgotten; but

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March, 1888, however, that the King communicated to the Prince what was proposed,* putting, as Stockmar had suggested, the whole difficulties of the position fully before him.

Meanwhile, in pursuance of the arrangement of the previous year, Stockmar arrived in England on May 25, 1836, the day after the Princess attained majority. William IV. had been in a critical state since the 20th of that month, and on June 20 he died. At this important juncture the counsel and help of an adviser so wise and so experienced could not be otherwise than most precious.† The outside world, always jealous of any influence near the throne, became, of course, busy with insinuations as to the mysterious presence in the Palace of this foreign agent of a foreign King. That he was doing work from the highest and most unselfish motives, for which the nation's gratitude was really due, was not likely to enter into the imagination of the Quidnuncs of the club-houses, or the Sneerwells of political circles. Lords Melbourne and

surely this fact is in itself a tolerably conclusive demonstration, that the hesitation extended no farther, although no pledge had been given, and no communication on the subject had passed between herself and the Prince.

* 'Early Years,' p. 217.

† Stockmar, in accordance with a rule he had long laid down for himself, would accept of no appointment, although he lent his active assistance to the young Queen as her secretary, when the duties of that office could not be performed by Lord Melbourne.

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Palmerston, the Premier and Foreign Minister, had long known him, and appreciated the services which he was especially fitted to render to the young Queen. The former spoke of him to the Queen as not merely 'a good man, but one of the cleverest he had ever met,' and Lord Palmerston, in conversation with Bunsen many years afterwards, cited him as the 'only absolutely disinterested man he had come across in life.' His influence, they were well aware, could only be for good; but Lord Melbourne—Pococurante, as Stockmar aptly named him—did not, it appears, much like the trouble of having to explain the true state of matters to captious members of his party, who taxed him with being too much under the influence of the Belgian King and his former Secretary. Things even went so far that the Speaker, Mr. Abercromby, threatened to bring what he called Stockmar's unconstitutional position before the House. 'Tell him,' was Stockmar's observation, 'to move in Parliament against me if he likes: I shall know how to defend myself.' On second thoughts, Mr. Abercromby happily dropped the subject, the agitation of which, in that period of strong party passion, could not have been otherwise than most inconvenient. Stockmar's constant aim at this time—and this was the only point in which Lord Melbourne and himself could not agree—was to enforce the obvious, but hitherto much neglected, doctrine, which had been acted on by Leopold in Belgium with

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marked success, that the monarch belongs to the nation, and must never be made use of for the purposes of party. What he saw of the conduct of the Whigs in this respect, at that time and subsequently, was a source of deep vexation to him, ominous, as he knew it to be, had it lasted, of the most mischievous consequences.

In December, 1838, Stockmar accompanied Prince Albert to Italy, and remained with him there till May of the following year, when he left him at Milan and returned to Coburg. In a memorandum quoted by his son (p. 331) the results of his observation of the Prince during this time are given. Read by the light of what the Prince subsequently became, it possesses a singular interest. The old physician's eye detected a weakness of constitution, which made him shrink from any sustained effort, either physical or mental. 'His constitution cannot be called strong. After any exertion he is apt to look for a time pale and exhausted.' It was, no doubt, his knowledge of this constitutional weakness which led Stockmar to say, with prophetic truth, in 1844, to Bishop Wilberforce,* 'If ever the Prince falls sick of a low fever, you will lose him.' With this physical drawback to contend against, the manner in which the Prince overcame the mental habits to which Stockmar next draws attention, and which must

* See *Quarterly Review* for October, 1867; article, 'Royal Authorship.'

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have been in a great degree due to constitutional delicacy, is most remarkable:

'Full of the best intentions and the noblest resolutions, he often falls short in giving them effect. His judgment in many things is beyond his years; but hitherto, at least, he shows not the slightest interest in politics. Even while the most important occurrences are in progress, and their issues undecided, he does not care to look into a newspaper.'

Stockmar's apprehension plainly was that there was a want of thoroughness in the Prince's character, as well as distaste for political affairs. Nor can we doubt that what he had seen then, and observed for some time afterwards, justified the apprehension, and made him press upon the Prince the necessity for such a discipline of his tastes and habits as was calculated to overcome every defect of natural inclination. How he triumphed, how soon the Prince became remarkable for thoroughness in everything he touched, for an activity that shrank from no fatigue, and for a mastery of political questions unusual even with veteran statesmen, needs not now to be told.

The strides made by the Prince in mastering the tendencies which his Mentor dreaded were rapid. So early as December, 1839, Stockmar writes to the Baroness Lehzen: 'The more I see of him, the more I love and esteem him. His intellect is so sound and clear, his nature so unspoiled, so child-

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like, so predisposed to goodness as well as truth, that time and intercourse with Englishmen of experience, culture, and integrity are alone wanting to make him truly distinguished.' He had soon the satisfaction of seeing the admirable qualities of his pupil—his fine judgment, tact, and moderation—coming more and more to the surface under the difficulties—and they were many—of his new position. Much had to be smoothed within the Palace, and the hostility of political parties outside had also to be reconciled. Here Stockmar's experience and influence with the leaders on both sides were applied with the best results, and, among other things, it was chiefly due to his intervention with Wellington and Peel that the Bill vesting the regency in the Prince passed, with only the dissentient voice of the Duke of Sussex, although a formidable opposition by the Tories on one hand and the Ultra-Liberals on the other, fomented by some of the royal Dukes, was at one time seriously apprehended.

The birth of the Princess Royal in November, 1840, found Stockmar again an inmate of the Palace, after a short visit to his home. The nursery department had to be organized, and in this his medical skill and forethought were called actively into play, and continued to be exercised for many years. 'The nursery costs me as much trouble,' he says in a letter, 'as the government of a kingdom could do.' It was the same at a later

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period with the education of the royal children. In everything it was the habit of Stockmar's mind to look far ahead—a course in which he was closely followed by the Prince Consort. Questions of importance were fully discussed long before they became pressing, and principles of action adopted, which it was thenceforth easy to pursue to a definite end. A glimpse is given of his masterly and exhaustive manner in an extract quoted in the 'Merkwürdigkeiten' from a plan which he drew up so early as the beginning of 1842 for the education of the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal. But dealing, as this extract does, with merely general principles, it gives only a partial view of the writer's power, which was not less remarkably shown in his breadth of view, than in the skill with which this was worked out into practical details. The Queen has placed upon record her gratitude for this portion of his services in the 'Early Years' (p. 188), where Her Majesty says she 'can never forget the assistance given by the Baron to the young couple in regulating their movements and general mode of life, and in directing the education of their children.'

Every day drew closer the ties which bound the Baron to the royal household. 'The Prince,' he writes in October, 1841, 'waxes apace morally and politically. I can truly say he is dear to me as a son, and he deserves to be so.' Again, on his return to England in April, 1848, from a winter residence

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in Coburg, 'the Prince is well and happy, though he frequently looks pale, worried, and weary. He is rapidly showing what is in him. He has within him a practical talent, which enables him to seize at a glance the essential points of a question, like the vulture that pounces on its prey and hurries off with it to its nest.' After this we hear no more of any misgivings as to lack of perseverance, or of interest in politics. A letter in 1847 shows us into what ten years of conscientious self-conquest and severe discipline had changed the youth from what his 'guide, philosopher, and friend' had found him in 1836:

'The Prince has made great strides of late. He has obviously a head for politics, before whose perspicacity even prejudices quickly give way, which spring from education or want of experience. Place weighty reasons before him, and at once he takes a rational and just view, be the subject what it may. He has also gained much in self-reliance. His natural vivacity leads him at times to jump too rapidly to a conclusion, and he occasionally acts too hastily; but he has grown too clear-sighted to commit any great mistakes. He will now and then run against a post and bruise his shins. But a man cannot be an experienced soldier without having been in battle and getting a few knocks, and, being what he is, small wounds, while they make him cautious, will give him confidence in himself. That in these days of political discord with France he should make great political mistakes is not probable, for he is thoroughly dispassionate, and he has so keen and sure an eye that

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he is not likely to lose his way and get into trouble. His mind becomes every day more active, and he devotes the greater part of his time to business without a murmur' (p. 466).

Not less interesting is what he says of the Queen in the same letter:

'The Queen also improves greatly. She makes daily advances in discernment and in experience; the candour, the love of truth, the fairness, the considerateness, with which she judges men and things are truly delightful, and the ingenuous self-knowledge with which she speaks about herself is amiable to a degree.'

For some time before these words were written Stockmar had become satisfied that events were impending which might alter the face of Europe. 'I foresee,' he says in the same letter, 'great revolutions.' On April 3 in the same year he had written to Bunsen: 'I am more and more convinced we are on the eve of a great political crisis.

'"Das Alte stürzt; es ändert sich die Zeit,
Und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen."'*

The events of 1848 soon came to prove the justice of this forecast. They also brought Stockmar directly for the first time into the public ranks of

* Stockmar's editor seems not to be aware that these lines, which he prints as prose, are a quotation from Schiller's 'Wilhelm Tell,' Act IV., Scene 2:

'The old reels to its fall; the times are changing,
And new life bursts and blossoms from the ruins.'

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political life. When the storm of February burst, he was in Germany, and he threw himself with all his energy into the heart of the movement there, in the hope of advancing his long-cherished vision of a united Germany. He appeared at the Diet as the accredited representative of Coburg, and he had even agreed to accept, upon certain conditions, the office of Foreign Minister. 'That would be a happy choice indeed,' said Lord Palmerston, when told of this by Bunsen. 'He is one of the best political heads I have ever met with.'

Into all the tedious futilities of the then Teutonic upheaval this is no place to enter. Suffice it to say, two points were from the first clear to Stockmar—viz., that union under Prussia was the end to be aimed at, and that this result was not to be reached by peaceful means, but only through a war which should shut out Austria from further intervention in the affairs of Germany, and also extinguish the opposition of the smaller Principalities. In these views he went far ahead of the best political thinkers of his time. Amid every discouragement, his faith in the ultimate accomplishment of the end desired remained unshaken to the last. Scarcely, however, could he have divined that it would be reached so soon, and by such means; least of all, that an impulse so important was to be given to it by the insane folly nursed by the principles of Thiers, Guizot, and others, which, in prompting the French invasion of 1870, drew together into one

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focus, as nothing else could have done, the hitherto incoherent elements of a German nation.

It was at this period that Meyer first met Stockmar at Baron Bunsen's, in London; and we are indebted to the 'Memoir' already quoted for the following spirited sketch of him. He was then fifty-nine:

'During breakfast Baron Stockmar was announced; when he entered and sat down, he very soon dominated the conversation—an active, decided, slender, rather little man, with a compact head, brown hair streaked with gray, a bold short nose, firm yet full mouth, and, what gave a peculiar air of animation to his face, with two youthful flashing brown eyes, full of roguish intelligence and fiery provocation. With this exterior the style of his demeanour and conversation corresponded; bold, bright, pungent, eager, full of thought, so that, amid all the bubbling copiousness and easy vivacity of his talk, a certain purpose in his remarks and illustrations was never lost sight of.'

When Stockmar found that nothing was to be expected for Germany from Frederick William IV., he turned his hopes from that eloquent and irresolute visionary to the future Emperor and Empress, then the Prince and Princess of Prussia. It was in accordance with his views of the best interests of both countries, that an alliance should be formed between the Royal Houses of Prussia and England. Our Princess Royal had been from childhood his especial favourite; and as he watched the develop-

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ment of her unusual gifts and distinguished character the advantages to Germany of having such a Princess for its future Queen became more and more apparent. 'From her youth up I have loved her,' he writes, in February, 1858, a few days after her marriage; 'have always expected much from her, and taken pains to be of service to her. I consider her to possess unusual gifts—in many cases amounting to inspiration.' It was with peculiar satisfaction, therefore, that he saw his long-cherished wishes for this alliance happily realized; and to the last he took an almost paternal interest in the welfare of this second generation of princely pupils, which was met on their part with the warmest affection.

In the previous year, 1857, he had taken his farewell of the English Court, where he had so long lived, using all his great gifts with rare unselfishness, to guide, animate, instruct, and strengthen others; 'the beloved and trusted friend of all beneath its roof, from the Queen to the humblest member of her household.'* The Queen and Prince were not aware that he was never to return. But some weeks before his departure he announced his intention, in a letter to King Leopold from Windsor Castle, resigning into his old master's hands the trust which he had so worthily fulfilled.

'In the spring of 1837,' he says, 'now, therefore, twenty years ago, I came back to England, to assist

* 'Early Years,' p. 188.

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the Princess Victoria, now Queen. This year I shall be seventy, and I am no longer either physically or mentally equal to the laborious and exhausting functions of a paternal friend, and an experienced father-confessor. I must say good-bye, and this time for ever. The law of nature will have it so. And well for me, that I can do this with a clear conscience; for I have worked as long as I had power to work, for ends which cannot be impugned. The consciousness of this is the reward, which alone I was anxious to deserve, and my dear master and friend, with full knowledge of the state of matters here, and of those for whom I have acted, gives me frankly and spontaneously from the bottom of his heart the testimony that I have deserved it.'

The tie, however, was not one to be broken by absence. The most intimate communications by correspondence continued to be kept up by those he had left behind in England and in Belgium. The Queen and Prince Consort saw him together on two subsequent occasions, once at Babelsberg in 1858, and again at Coburg in 1860. The habit of sharing with this second father, not only his thoughts on public questions, but his private joys and sorrows, which had grown up through their long years of personal intercourse, was continued by the Prince Consort to the last. To him one of his latest letters was addressed. 'I am terribly in want of a true friend and counsellor,' writes the Prince; 'and that you are that friend you may readily understand.' In a month the Prince was dead.

This national loss seemed to Stockmar a death-

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blow to the great purpose of his life. 'A structure, to use his own words, 'which was conscientiously reared for the accomplishment of a great and important object, with a devout sense of duty, and the toilsome effort of twenty years, has been shattered to its foundation.' In 1862 the widowed Queen sought the good old man at Coburg. 'My dear, good Prince!' he exclaimed, 'how happy I shall be to see him again! and it will not be long.' And it was not long. On July 9, 1863, death brought his wearied spirit the release for which it had long been yearning.

The pains of weakness and age had for some years pressed heavily upon him, and added to the melancholy from which not even the retrospect of a well-spent life could protect him. It is sad to read in one of his latest letters to the King of the Belgians such words as these: 'I confess I was not prepared for so comfortless an old age. Often, very often, I am on the verge of despair. The riddles of life grow daily more difficult to me.' But such moods could only be the passing clouds of a soul unusually sensitive and sympathetic, and therefore unusually suffering, to which a lifelong faith in the ultimate issue of all things for good, under the directing hand of a benign Father, had given a prevailing aspect of calmness and serenity. 'His reliance on the love and justice of God,' says his friend Meyer, 'and on the goodness of the human heart, never forsook him.'

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Multum dilexit; and it was characteristic of the depth as well as tenderness of his feelings, that his loving nature, his sweet temper, his devotion to his friends, were often little to be surmised under what seemed, to those who did not know him well, to be stoical reserve, or self-centred indifference. Christian to the core, Love, Duty, Truth were the mainsprings of his life, as they were the mainsprings of his influence. Thus it was, therefore, that he not only did and counselled the doing of

> 'the right because it was the right,
> In scorn of consequence,'

but men of all ranks, and of the most varied opinions—Kings, Princes, diplomatists, politicians —those with whom he differed no less than those with whom he agreed, those whom he disliked no less than those whom he admired—were so conscious that he had no ends of his own to serve, and that he was thoroughly to be relied on for fairness, for reticence, and for directness, that they caught in their dealings with him something of his own spirit, and yielded to him a confidence which they never had occasion to regret.

'If a young man just entering into life,' are his own beautiful words in a letter of his later years, 'were to ask me, What is the chief good for which it behoves a man to strive? I could only say to him, Love and Friendship! Were he to ask me, What is a man's most priceless possession? I

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must answer, The consciousness of having loved and sought the truth, of having yearned after what is good for its own sake! All else is either mere vanity or a sick man's dream.'

It was only consistent with this creed that, looking back in his last days on what he had done, well appreciating its importance, and not unconscious of the worldly honour and reputation which, had his aim been personal ambition, it would have been easy for him to achieve, he should have no feeling of regret for the course he had early chosen and deliberately pursued, of living for others and not for himself.

'The singularity of my position,' he says, 'required me anxiously to efface myself, and to conceal, as though it were a crime, the best purposes I had in view, and frequently carried out. Like a thief in the night, I placed with liberal hand the seed within the earth, and when the plant grew up, and became visible to other people, it was my duty to ascribe the merit to others, and no other course was open to me. . . . If circumstances and men commonly combine so as to veil the best of my conceptions and ideas, and the enterprises based upon them, in darkness and night, that it is impossible to form the faintest conception as to the source from which they truly sprang, this will not cause me any great vexation.'

In the eyes of such a man, not the doer, but the work done, if worthy in itself and in its fruits, was the all in all. He had shunned the glare of the

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world's honours through life. Was it likely that, in the contemplation of a greater Hereafter, he should sigh for the empty glories of a posthumous fame?

A letter to me, dated April 18, 1872, from the late M. Silvain Van de Weyer, the Belgian Ambassador, written on reading this sketch of Stockmar, when it appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, has a special value, as no one knew Stockmar, both as diplomatist and as friend, more intimately than M. Van de Weyer, himself one of the most sagacious and acute of observers.

'DEAR MR. MARTIN,

'I cannot tell you with what delight I have read your admirable article. I have read it *three times most attentively*. I like its high moral and religious tone, so perfectly consonant with my old and revered friend's character. . . . The duration of Stockmar's influence will be explained by the principles which he laid down in one of my numerous confidential conversations with him: "If you are consulted by Princes to whom you are attached, give your opinion truthfully, boldly, without reserve or reticence. Should your opinion not be palatable, do not, to please or conciliate them, deviate for a moment from what you think the truth. You may, in consequence, be some time out of favour, treated with neglect or coldness. Never mind it, and when they come back (for come back they will, if you remain honest and firm) never complain of the treatment you have received; never beg to make them own how right

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you were, and how wrong they have been. It must be enough for you that they should, for their good and the good of the country, act upon the principles, the soundness of which is thus acknowledged."

'Another point remains still unexplained. How is it, will a thoughtful reader ask, that Stockmar had such a permanent influence upon men so different in so many respects as Lord Aberdeen, Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Palmerston, Sir Robert Peel, etc.? It was not only because they recognised his great political ability, but also because they all felt that they were *in safe hands*, that he would never betray them, show up their foibles, their errors, their faults, play off one political man against another, join in any back-stair intrigue, or avail himself of his position to undermine them in the opinion of their Sovereign or the public, and diminish their political usefulness. How many instances I could quote of the support given by him to men that he disliked the most! But the time for such revelations is not come.

'However concealed, the tenderness of his heart, his loving nature, and his sweet temper, his devotion to his friends under a stoical appearance deceived none of those who knew him well; and to know him was to love him. Excuse this long note,

'And believe me,

'Yours very sincerely,

'SILVAIN VAN DE WEYER.'

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